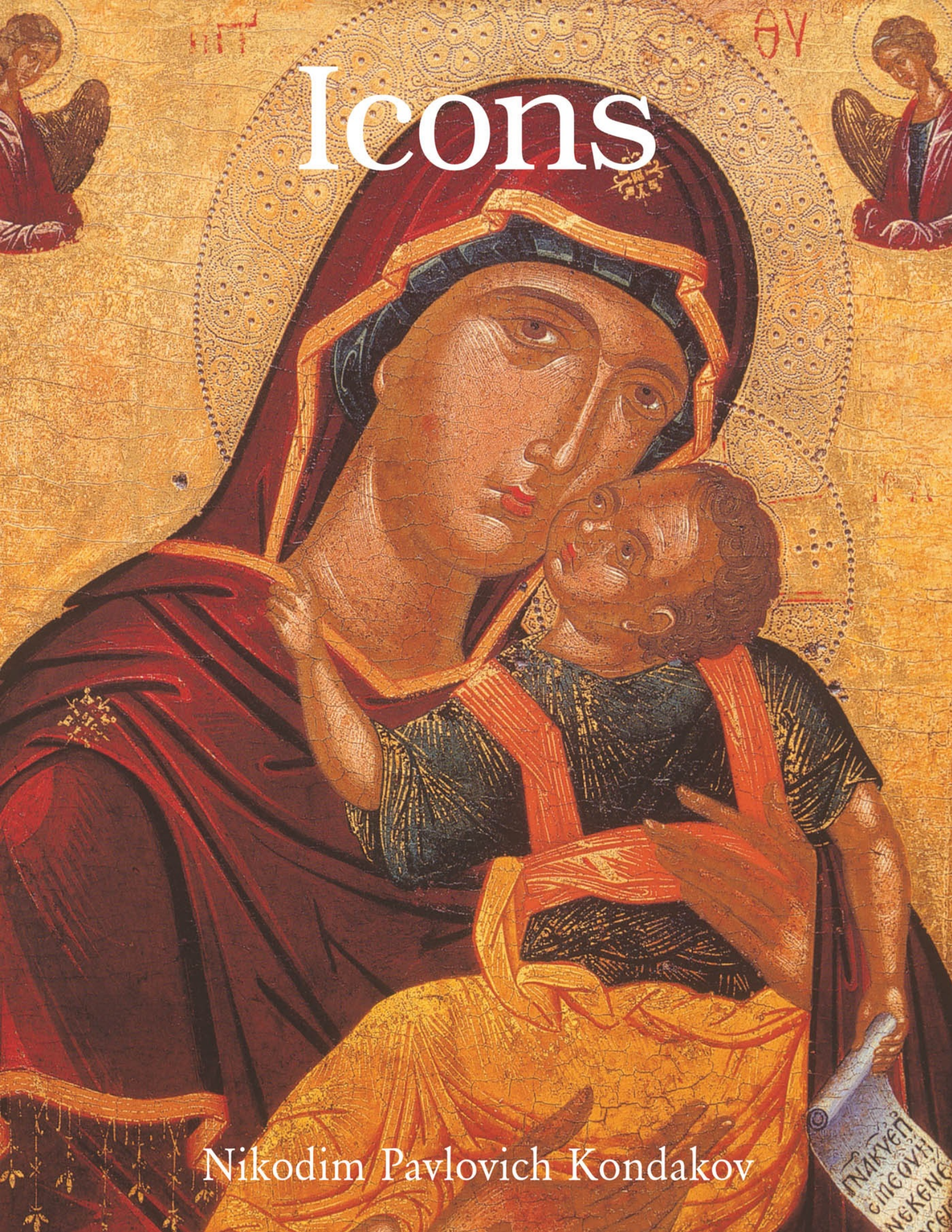


Icons

Nikodim Pavlovich Kondakov



Text: Nikodim Pavlovich Kondakov
Layout:
Baseline Co. Ltd

61A-63A Vo Van Tan Street

4th Floor District 3, Ho Chi Minh City Vietnam

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NIKODIM PAVLOVICH KONDAKOV

Icons



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1. Map of Russia, between the 11th and the 13th centuries.



Introduction

Among graphic arts, the icon took first place in Russian life. Apart from the early Novgorod wall-painting, we may call the icon the chief expression of religious thought and popular feeling as early as the fourteenth century. Later, when wall-painting became subordinate to icon-painting, the icon became the one and only symbol of faith. In view of its special significance and its derivation from the Byzantine model, the Russian icon takes its place as the continuation of a high artistic tradition and in its development offers an unparalleled example of artistic craftsmanship. In its decorative qualities, the uniqueness of its composition, the severity of its types, the ideal character and spiritual depth of the religious thought it conveyed, the icon is to be compared with the early period of religious art in Western Europe. Besides this, the historian of art must bear in mind that the easel-picture arose over time from the icon. They must make every effort to comprehend the artform of the Russian icon in order to understand the historical traditions lying behind easel painting and influencing it to this day. Finally, from the early eighteenth century to the present day, the Russian icon has long existed as a handicraft or *kustár'* product.

[\[1\]](#)

As such, icons deserve the attention of art historians, for artistic handicrafts present difficult and complicated problems to historical interpretation which, for such reasons, have long been avoided. The time has come for Russian archaeology to study Russian icon-painting and trace through this particular phenomenon's five centuries of history. Three centuries of neglect beginning with Peter the Great have sundered the Russian people from the last flourishing period of this artform and destroyed a greater number of icons than all the town fires and devastations in the Russian countryside combined.

Inventories tell us just how rich in icons the Russian cathedrals, monasteries, and private houses once were and also demonstrate the Muscovites' reverence before ancient and hallowed icons. With great precision, these documents allow us to follow the disappearance of icons from Russian churches since the eighteenth century. Even as late as the early nineteenth century the Moscow churches were full of ancient sacred objects. The walls of the monasteries were hung with 'Votive' and 'Festival' icons and the outer chapels with panels of the saints of the calendar (*Menaea*). As people ceased to care for them, forgot about them and no longer looked after them (and they require constant repair), they were put into storage — and that meant destruction for many of the best icons. It was in the face of this destruction that there appeared all sorts of imitation work on tinfoil (*fólezhnoe*), *podubórnoe*,^[2] paper, and other materials of the cheapest sort.

Icon-painting hid itself in the depths of the country: at Suzdal' and in the Súzdal' district there arose whole settlements of icon-painters, Mstëra, Palëkh, and Khóluy, but of these Palëkh and Khóluy had already adopted the 'Frankish' style^[3] and 'naturalistic' painting (*zhívopis'*). Little Russia had rude 'naturalistic' icons as early as the seventeenth century: the success of Borovikóvski's talent attracted general attention.



2. *Christ in Glory, Giving His Blessing*, 4th century.

Decoration of an opus sectile, coming from an edifice near Port Marina. Museo Ostiense, Ostia.

The cathedrals^[4] and churches of the South first began to be decorated by ordinary painters. Later, the region was followed by Muscovy in deserting the old fashion. The only people left to revere it were the Old Believers. They adopted as their favourite style that called after the Stróganovs and thus ensured its predominance in the workshops of Moscow and Súzdal’.

The excessive admiration for everything Western which was universal among educated Russians during the eighteenth century suffered a reaction at the time of the war against Napoleon. National feeling was raised to fever pitch, which was sustained by the romantic tendency of the new Russian literature. The educated classes were drawn into a movement, called on its political side Slavophilism, for restoring and preserving the popular traditions. Educated men in the highest social positions, such as Rummyántsev, Olénin, and Evgéni Bolkhovítinov, Metropolitan of Kiev, began to collect the literary memorials of ancient Russia, chronicles and charters, and encouraged the making of archaeological surveys of ancient monasteries and churches. The icons that attracted most attention, and this chiefly from the historical side, were those

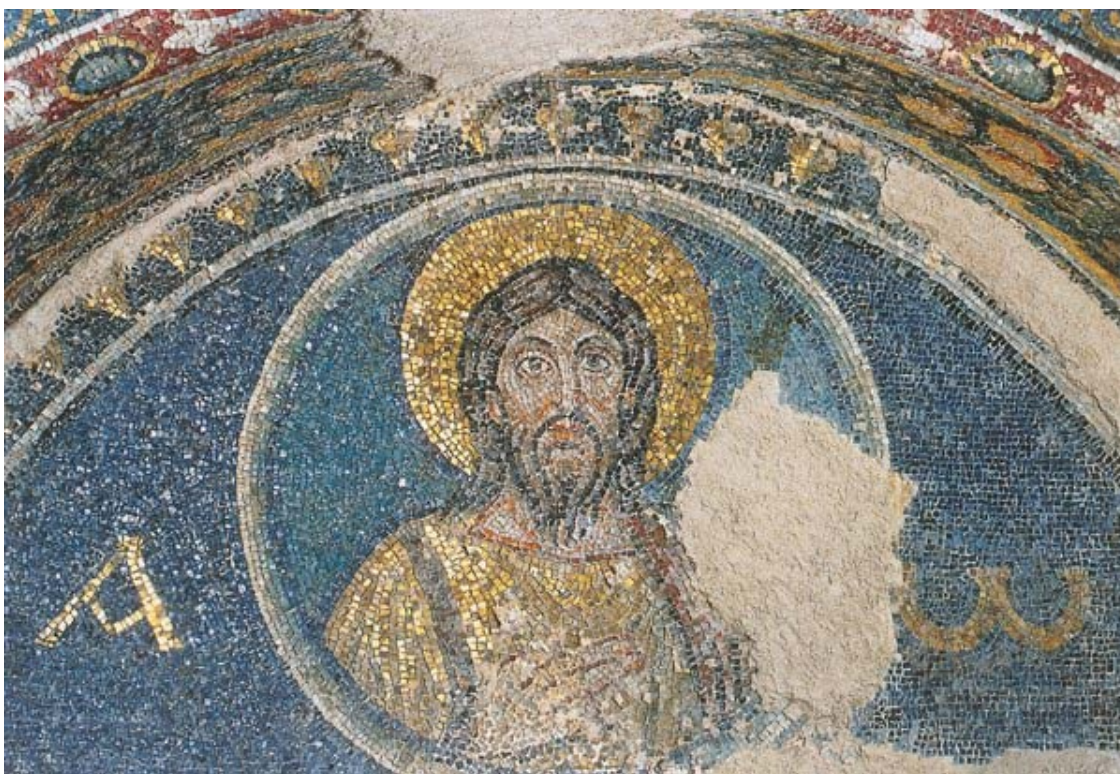
famous for working miracles.

In the eighteen twenties and thirties, the number of antiquaries and collectors increased and the foundations of historical museums of Russian antiquities were laid. A great collector of manuscripts and icons was the historian m. P. Pogódin. The documentary side of Russian historical scholarship was encouraged by the Moscow Historical and Antiquarian Society which was founded in 1806. It was upon this documentation that all I. m. Snegirëv's work on the history of the churches and monasteries of Moscow was based.[5] On the other hand, the chief stimulus to the archaeology of objects was given by the inauguration in St. Petersburg of the Russian Archaeological Society in 1846.[6]

It was this atmosphere which trained for their heroic searches after Russian and Christian antiquities the famous Bishop Porfíri Uspénski, who discovered and collected the most ancient known icons from the Greek East, V. A. Prókhorov, who increased the collection of Russian Antiquities in the Academy of Fine Arts, and I. P. Sákharov, who emarked upon a large-scale *Enquiry into Russian Icon-painting* but was only able to produce a few fragments. The famous I.E. Zabêlin in his *The Manner of Life of the Russian Tsars and Tsaritsas* made accessible the main written sources for the archeology of objects, and was the first to publish *Materials for a History of Russian Icon-painting*. [7]

In the eighteen sixties the chief authorities on Russian icon-painting were G. D. Filimónov and D. A. Rovínski, natives of Moscow and pupils of the Moscow and Suzdal' icon-painters. Filimónov was cautious in his work and left no general study of icons, only a biography of Simon Ushakóv, the text of an interesting *Pódlinnik* [8], and an account of an excursion to the icon-painting villages. Rovínski attacked the matter more boldly and produced a short *History of the Russian Schools of Icon-painting down to the end of the 17th century*. [9]

Historical analysis is the natural result of cleaning the icons; this begun at the end of the nineteenth century and special attention has been paid to it. After much labour and minute care, the dark and smoke-begrimed icon reveals bright colours and harmonious shades. Now that they have been cleaned, the decorative beauty of the big icons in the State Russian Museum is so attractive that the neighbouring galleries of modern pictures, with their general effect of grey colouring, look pale and depressing. Formerly the walls of this museum and the great screen of the Uspénski (Assumption) Cathedral at Moscow had nothing to offer but what Bunin calls 'icons, black planks, poor symbols of God's might'. Now, out of the black planks, we have restored pictures that attract the eye with their patches of bright colour and the charm of their delicate half-tones.



3. *Mosaic of Christ*, 5th century.
Chapel of San Prisco, near Santa Maria Capua Vetere.

This show-side of the newly cleaned icons in the museums and private collections attracted the attention of the press, which was carried away by aesthetic enthusiasm and rated them too highly. Magazine writers disregarded the historical side of the matter and glorified the newly discovered ‘great, inspired and magnificent art’, ‘an enormous addition to the world’s stock of artistic treasures’; fancy divorced from criticism found in icon-painting; ‘a free idealism’ which was supposed ‘to know neither space nor time, living amid unknown mountains and plains, essentially cut off by a great gulf from history, literature, nature herself and life’. To counteract these extravagances there was imperative need for a critical estimate of select examples, a definite course of investigation, and a practical application of scientific method guided by comparison and historical classification.

An opportunity for this was afforded by the enlightened action of the See of Novgorod. In the diocesan museum and in the church of Ss. Peter and Paul^[10] it was found possible to clean the most ancient Novgorod icons, and this gave a real basis for investigating the history of icon-painting in the Novgorod period. This investigation, joined with that of the Greek models, made it possible to

confute the view that tradition was immovable.[\[11\]](#)

The Russian icon began, of course, by imitating the Greek model, but this model was not always accessible (e.g. in Novgorod) and began itself to change: the Greek or purely Byzantine style gave way to the Greco-Oriental, this to the Greco-Italian, and finally to the Neo-Greek style. So the Russian icon lived by tradition, mainly because it was satisfied with being a craft without pretending to creativeness, but it adopted one tradition after another following each new pattern. The fact is that the Greek icon, for all its changes, equally kept to tradition because it, likewise, was a mere handicraft.

But as a craft, the Russian icon brought forth real talents, and they made use either of their own personal creativeness or else adapted new examples and types. These talents at once found pupils, forming and developing schools of craftsmen who spread abroad their style and manner. The main reason why they were successful was because they did not violate tradition but aimed at an improved execution of an inherited model. The process of perfecting the form brought with it a national remodelling of the foreign original, and side by side with this, a new spiritual content expressing itself in the improved form and due to personal feeling. But any new contribution was typically Russian and so easily accepted. Accordingly, the processes of artistic creation in Russia were such that we can lay bare the actual mechanism by which it lived and changed. Artistic phenomena may have been simpler in Russia than abroad, but the area over which development went on was very wide, comprising the lands of Novgorod, Pskov, Tver', Vólogda and all the north, besides Suzdal' and Moscow: it was a civilizing work which spread over all Muscovite Russia, the most advanced part of the Eastern European plains. The development of the artistic form in drawing and colouring must not take all our attention to the neglect of content; both on the religious side, the choice and invention of the theme or subject and its composition, and also on the side touching material life, the store of types, their setting, buildings, landscapes, clothing and vestments, and everything which is meant by iconography. Thus, we shall see that though ancient Russia was divided from western Europe by the great gulf which looks insuperable to the eye of the political historian from the time of the Mongol invasion, we can observe in Russian icon-painting essentially the same movement as that which was going on in the West; but here its greater force and brilliancy led up to the general achievement of Europe in the Renaissance. In Russian icon-painting we can see, from the end of the fourteenth century, a change in direction turning the iconographic tradition towards feeling and expression. This break both enlivened the form and also changed the religious idea expressed by the icon; instead of the Byzantine dogma we have religious

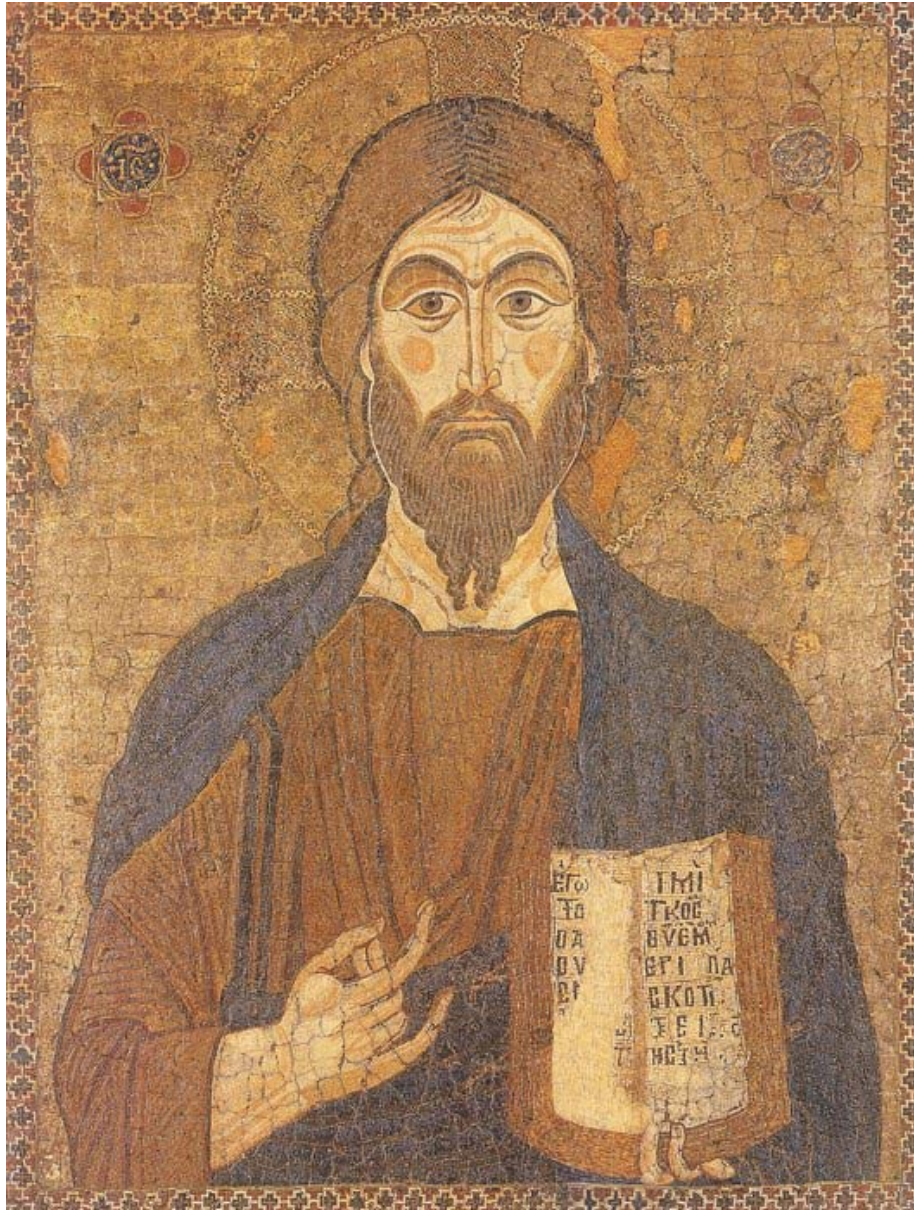
life, drawing man nearer to God. At the same time, the types change from Greek to Russian and the iconographic scheme is enriched with subsidiary groups and more elaborate settings: it wakes up, loses its deadness, and becomes alive and picturesque. We shall see later that the more perfect icon-paintings of the Novgorod and Moscow schools in the sixteenth century answer, in their complicated composition, theological subjects, and comparatively severe and correct drawing to the full Renaissance in Italy. The natural inference is that, besides the historical parallel between the two arts, we have to reckon with the direct influence of foreign, mostly Italian, examples and also of artists coming if not from Italy then from the Greek East, subject since the fifteenth century to the artistic influence of Italy.



4. *Our Lady Hodegetria (Double-sided Icon)*, 12th century.
Byzantine Museum, Kastoria, Macedonia.



5. *Christ Pantocrator*, end of the 13th century.
Egg tempera on plaster on wood, 47.5 x 30 cm.
The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.



6. *Christ Pantocrator*, 12th century. Mosaic.
Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.



7. *The Virgin with Child* or “*Virgin glykophilousa*”,
Cretan School, c. 1500. 332 x 332 cm.
Musée du Louvre, Paris.

My long-continued study of the iconography of the Virgin in Byzantium, in western Europe, and in Russia, led me to the discovery that many ancient, and even wonder-working icons of the Virgin, now cherished and revered in Russia, have their prototypes and patterns in Greco-Italian icons of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[\[12\]](#) The characteristic style of these icons was already, in the fifteenth century, prominent in wall-painting and became the model for icon-painting first at Suzdal', then Novgorod, and finally all over Russia; however, its influence was weaker in the Novgorod school, which early lost the Byzantine

manner and refinement. This style even received the honourable name of 'Greek' as opposed to the 'Frankish' (*Fryázhski*) style, a mixture of late Greek and Western art. This streak of foreign influence, enlivening the decadence of the Byzantine scheme and meeting the spiritual demands of the nation, runs so clearly through the whole domain of Russian icon-painting that it is just the path which was wanted to lead Russia through its *terra incognita*. It gives us a definite historical landmark which enables us more or less to take our bearings and, best of all, to get away from that domination of the mere *ipse dixit* which marks both barbarism and superficial aesthetic criticism.[\[13\]](#)

Modern aestheticism in Russia, coming from dilettantes and journalists, hastened to declare the Russian icon to be 'great art', the discovery of which would astonish Europe and which would claim a place as a 'new world-treasure'.[\[14\]](#) According to these commentators, the Russian icon may no doubt repeat the Byzantine composition but it saves its 'creativity' by artistic reproduction of it: the icon has 'style', which, they maintain, is wanting in Italian art of the same date, so the latter sinks into a 'provincial art'. According to them the role played by the *Pódlinniki* with models for icon-painting is very much exaggerated, the idea being that the brilliant period of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries had no such thing as *perevódy*, that is, as it were, stencils for tracing icons, nor yet foreign models. The style of the Russian icon is supposed to be without expression and without narrative; it is not tied to life and to its reality, it is a 'pure art'. Its types are in themselves national and though the Russian figure of Christ is of a foreign type, still they hold that it contains a 'Russian soul'. The Russian icon is made out to be 'aristocratic'; its 'idealism is immovable' and 'open to the contemplation of miracle'. Everything in an icon is ideal; even the buildings and hills offer an 'imaginary world', with types 'imponderable', 'fined away in their idealism'. The worship of a sacred art devoted to icons always kept its hold on Russia, and pointed to the East not to the West. In this art, the line and the design are ruled by tradition: the colours, their selection and blending belong to the individual; according to their special prescriptions we distinguish the different schools. The bright colour of Russian icons and the striking beauty of the combinations of shades are, all in all, the strength of the Russian icon.

To show that this aesthetic theory is absolutely wanting in any scientific consistency or philosophical content there is no need to analyse it as a whole or in detail: it is sufficient to confront it with a statement founded upon history and an analysis of the facts.



8. *The Virgin of Tolg*, 13th century.
Egg tempera on cypress panel, 140 x 92 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



9. *Faiyum Portrait*, 4th century.
Národní galerie v Praze, Prague.



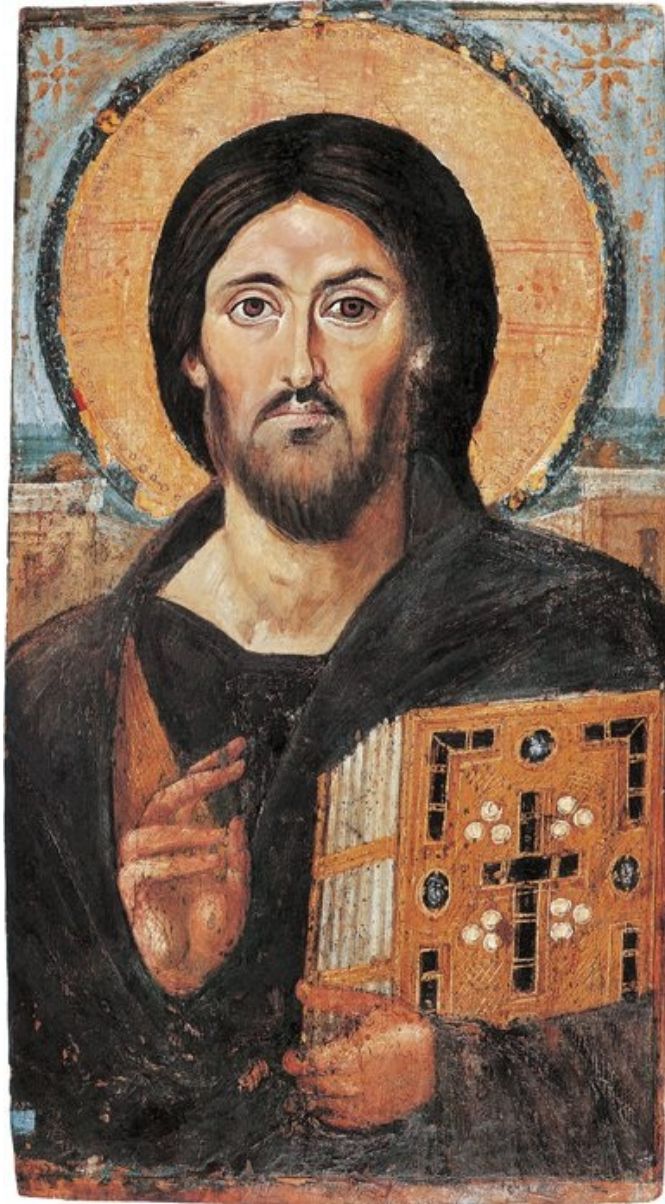
Origins: the Orient and Greece

The history of the Russian icon must begin with its original source, its most ancient prototype. As we shall see, the Byzantine icon, the model which the Russians adopted with Christianity, has left very few surviving examples and so, having lost its own history, can scarcely furnish a basis for the history of the Russian icon. It is unlikely that ancient Kiev received its icons directly from Byzance itself, with which it often lost touch owing to the Nomad barrier. To Kiev things came mainly from Chersonesus Taurica: we find both at Chersonesus and at Kiev identical objects of the tenth to twelfth centuries, bronze crosses, coloured tiles, glazed pottery, and the like.[\[15\]](#)

Chersonesus, a great commercial city, supplied ancient Russia with all kinds of goods from Asia Minor, exported through Sinope and Trebizond. The Grecian East was the true home of the icon; it arose there in the fourth century and spread abroad in the fifth. Fathers of the Church, such as S. John Chrysostom or Gregory of Nysa, already knew of it as an adjunct of the Christian faith. The icon was nothing new; it was born among the ordinary panel portraits of martyrs and confessors which were executed by the encaustic or wax process and laid either upon the coffins and sarcophagi or else upon definite shrines in *martyria* or *memoriae*.[\[16\]](#) When such palpable honour, done to the martyrs memory, was rendered as a portrait, it gave the wooden panel the sacred significance of the honoured *icon*.[\[17\]](#)

This early stage of the icon's history is itself connected with an ancient custom where the ancient Egyptians prepared painted portraits of the dead and laid them so that they showed from underneath the mummy bands. In the early centuries of our era, the Alexandrian school of painting had reached sufficient artistic perfection to allow of the existence of many artistic firms ready to

produce, quickly and cheaply, portraits of the most striking realism. The Egyptians, when they equipped the dead man for the life beyond the grave, thanks to the strength of the priestly code, kept close to primitive materialism and surrounded the 'everlasting' home of the dead man with everything that characterised his life on earth. This was necessitated by their belief that the soul, though it had escaped from the body, was still bound to it by indissoluble ties and needed these make-believe surroundings for its continued existence. Hence they set up *stelae* with representations of offerings made at the tomb, and of kinsfolk praying that the soul should attain the good things of this world and entrance to the heavenly mansions. In the latest period towards the Christian era the exact portrait of the deceased, identified with his double (*ka*), took its place in the grave, and retained the powers of a mystic and vivifying image which maintained the link between the departed soul and the deserted body preserved in the form of a mummy. The funeral furnishers enclosed the mummy in a papier-mâché case with a coloured mask of the dead man. Later they substituted for this his portrait in the flat, painted on a separate board either from the life or after death, but with all the features and appearance of life. The board was slipped inside the tight mummy bands over the face: the picture gives sometimes just the head, sometimes the beginnings of the shoulders or the full bust. Cemeteries with such mummies have been found in the sandy shores of dried-up lakes in the Fayum, at Antinopolis and elsewhere, and have yielded whole series of realistic portraits. They are done by the encaustic method, that is, by the manipulation of heated coloured wax with a spatula. In these realistic heads we at once can see a highly developed technique and journeyman execution. The features are undoubtedly individual, the colours rich and bright, but the touch in the curls is dry. Round the lady's neck is a fine gold chain with an amulet. The portraits were executed hastily; the pats of coloured wax have not been thoroughly melted. A typical manner is common to them all, a tendency to make the face look young, to slur over the signs of age and even of full manhood. The eyes are emphasised, to produce the illusion of life.[\[18\]](#)



10. *Christ Pantocrator*, 6th century.
Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt.



11. *Saint Peter*, 6th century.
Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt.

The wax technique was chosen for the Egyptian portraits because it was the quickest process, but by its nature, it demanded great skill in the craftsman and was accordingly expensive. As a result, we also have a whole series of similar portraits executed either in tempera (a mixture of egg white and lime) or in the regular egg technique with the yolk as medium. Two such in the State Russian Museum merely show the heads: they are painted on oblong boards, the width being greater than the height. The icon of Ss. Sergius and Bacchus in Kiev

Theological Academy is of this shape, as are icons represented in paintings and suchlike; they all reproduce the type of long-shaped icon laid upon a coffin or sarcophagus. These very ancient examples show the same manner of working as is still practised by Russian icon-painters. The ground colour is a dark brown, upon this the features are painted first in reddish ochre and then in light brown, so that the ground colour gives the shading and finally the lighted planes (*modelé*) and the highlights are done in ochre mixed with white lead or in pure white lead. These highlights can be found in the work of the Russian icon-painters, who call them *blik* (German *Blick*), *ozhívka* (from *ozhivát* to enliven), or *dvízhka* (from *dvígaf* to move); in French *rehaut*, *reflet*, *lumière*.

In the faces, the eyes are rendered with special emphasis and force, first by a deep shaded orbit and next by the bold relief of the forehead, brows, eyelids and thick lashes, and finally by putting in the pupil and the shining point of its centre (*svêtik* – little light). Characteristic of an icon is it that it should give no more than the bust of the saint, but that the clothing of this, though showing no more than the shoulders, should indicate his calling in life, especially in the case of a priest, bishop, or patriarch. Russian icon-painters use the term *ikóna opléchnaya* (to the shoulders) as distinct from *golovnáyá* (head), *pogrudndya* (bust to the breast), and *stoyáchaya* (standing, full length).

Another feature of the icon is that it always gives the picture of the Saviour (*Spas*), the Virgin or of some other saint as facing the worshipper, just as the painted portrait of the dead Egyptian was designed to look at his kinsfolk who were supposed to come to the reception-room of his resting place or to the spot where in the form of his swathed mummy he was buried in the sand. Representations of saints in profile were only to be found on small icons which were hung on to the saint's big icon as votive reminders of a worshipper; or else they only came in with later times. Finally, the original type of the Egyptian portrait shows with special clearness in the colouring of the icon, particularly in the Russian icon: icons from Greece proper and other varieties frequently diverge from the early type. The reason for this is that the Russian icon, from first to last, drew its inspiration from Greco-Oriental models, these models coming at first from Egypt and Syria and later from Asia Minor which had early adopted the Greco-Oriental style. The Syro-Egyptian style was marked from the beginning by deep, rich, warm, and, at the same time, artistic colouring; on the one hand this reproduced the rich colouring of the Nile valley, on the other it reached the perfect ideal of a deep and rich colour-scale. This colouring reproduces both the hot, pallid buff of the desert sky during the burning *Khamsin*, and the glorious contrast of the dark lilac, velvety chocolate and reddish-brown mountains amid the buff sand of the desert. From this came the

tones that run through Egyptian dress, decorated in dark lilac and chocolate brown on a ground of buff unbleached linen, and through the simple scale of Egyptian wall-paintings with brown and lilac on a buff ground. We find the same thing in the Ravenna mosaics: here the figures of holy men and women are almost without exception in pale buff with lilac adornments of clothes and insignia upon a dark blue ground. We shall later see that the icons which bear in Russian tradition the name of *Korsún* are all distinguished by a scale of dark chocolate or brown upon a buff ground and these Korsun' icons, which came to Russia from Chersonesus Taurica, Caffa, and Trebizond, were copies of Greco-Oriental icons. Even more significant is it, that by setting out a series of icons, we can show how the early Venetian icon-painting with its rich and deep colouring, dark purple, dark lilac, dark green, rich blue, and dark brown or chocolate, was derived from the Greco-Oriental models. Great painters arrive at a consummate *chiaroscuro*, almost eliminate true colour and only make use of an endless gradation of tones. It turns out that this tonality was already in use in the earliest icon-painting. This is the place to emphasise the fact that it was only the use of a *chiaroscuro* which almost excluded colour which led in the case of certain iconic types to an unearthly paleness. Upon this paleness the aesthetic enthusiasts for icons have seized to support their view that the fundamental aim of the icon is to express the incorporeality of the saints in their orders. The fact is that the Syro-Egyptian type, in its historical form, was in existence in Russia in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and was embodied in the icons of S. Nicholas the Wonderworker and S. John the Forerunner as rendered in certain severe styles. However, this was merely temporary and in no way to be taken as determinative for the majority of schools or for other periods. The essence of the icon consists in the traditional striving after strong relief: from this proceeded, as we shall see, the system of lightened planes in Byzantine and Russian icon-painting. The yolk of egg medium particularly lends itself to the system of laying one coat upon another, each made lighter than the last by the addition of white lead to the ochre. It also gives full value to the pure and bright colours of the pigments: in this it differs much from the western tempera (white of egg medium) which inevitably gives a dead tint to the flesh. At its point of departure, the icon derived both from a higher artistic portrait and from a more artistic technique, for the encaustic process demanded at once a skilled and practised craftsman and an artist of advanced talent. But of course, this situation could not remain for ever. It was rendered impossible by the transference of the craft to a fresh nation and the lack of models. The transfer of the icon from Syria and Egypt to Greece and Byzantium resulted in a striking difference in its characteristic features, this became more so the case when it came to Russia.

Rich reddish ochre, a warm brown, brick-red, and black – these were the traditional colours of the Egyptian craft worked upon wood. On this basis came the addition of dark green, indigo, and deep lilac. Such is the colouring of the Greco-Oriental mosaics so far known to us, those in Cyprus, Ravenna, and some of those in Rome and of the Greco-Oriental icons. Quite different and incomparably brighter is the decorative colouring of the wall-paintings and mosaics of Constantinople, the true Byzantine style.^[19] Accordingly, the Byzantine icon also makes a significant departure from the Greco-Oriental colouring, and adopts the bright tones of miniatures and frescoes. The same was the case at Novgorod, where the Greco-Oriental originals passed away and gave place to others, so that the icon-painters, left without models and painting iconostases, went over to a bright style of painting. In such cases the most characteristic feature is the predominance of so-called folk-colours, specifically, bright red (vermilion) and light green. In the ways outlined above, the icon resembled the portraits. What then are the fundamental differences? The icon of a saint differs from his portrait in being its mere copy or replica for which a general resemblance is sufficient; it keeps the general type of his face, his distinguishing marks, his character, but as it is a mere journeyman's copy and it cannot give the refinements of individual features. The face of S. John the Baptist is always typical, but in it there is no individuality, so too in the faces of Mary and the other saints. Nonetheless, we can pursue this, and see how far icons derive from individual, though not artistic, portraits.



12. *Bust of Saint Nicholas and Saints
in Medallions, 10th to 11th century.*
Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt.



13. *The Crucifixion and Saints
in Medallions, 11th to 12th century.*
Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt.



14. *The Annunciation*, end of the 12th century.
Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt.



15. *Our Lady with Child Between Two Angels*,
6th to 7th century. Santa Maria in Trastevere, Rome.



16. *The Baptism of Christ*, 10th century. Icon from one of the Twelve Great Festivals of the Iconostasis. Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt.



17. *The Archangel Saint Michael*, 11th century.
Icon of gilded silver, enamel and precious stones.
Saint Mark's Basilica Treasure, Venice.



18. *The Spiritual Ladder of
Saint John Climacus*, 11th to 12th century.
Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt.

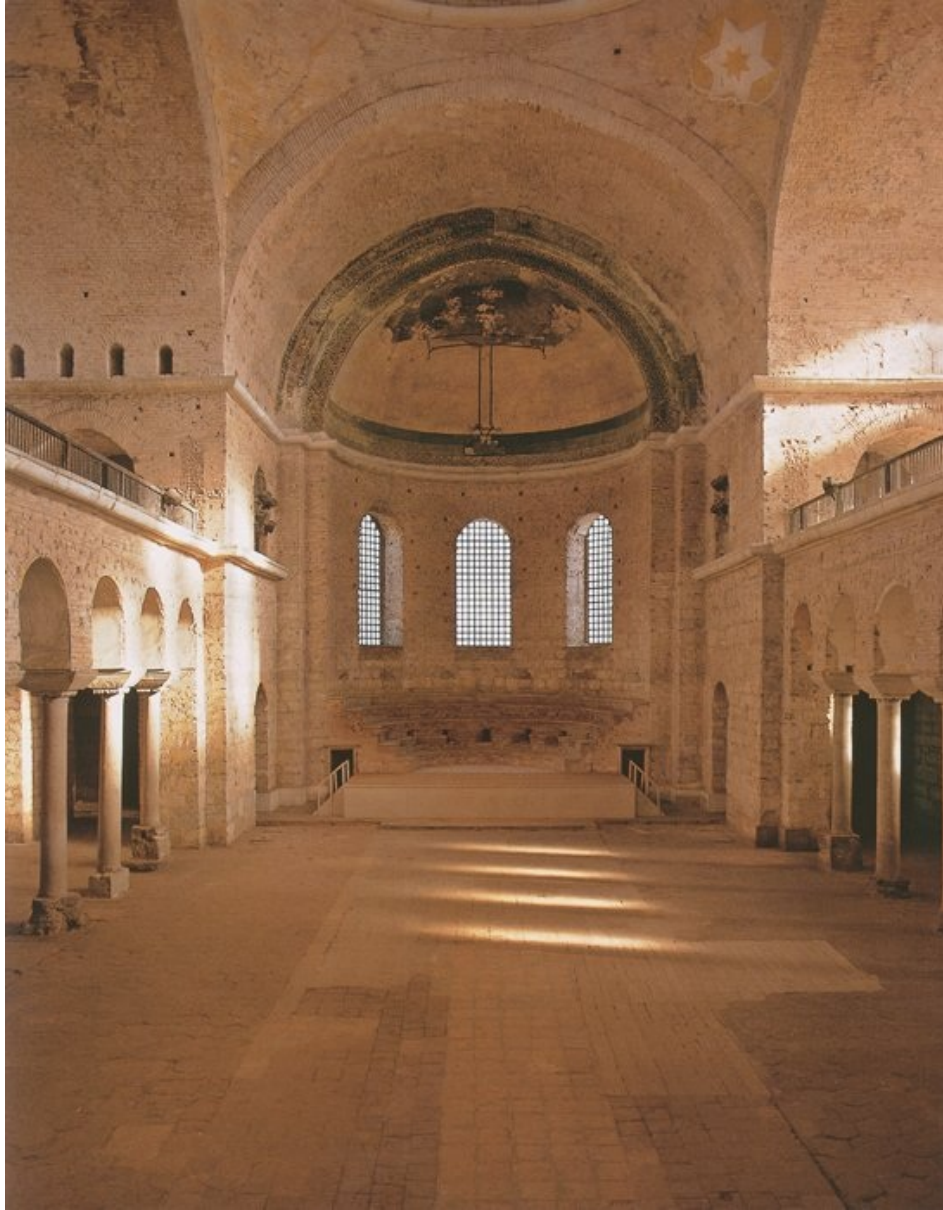


19. *The Council of Nicaea I*, Melkite Icon
from the 17th century. Abou Adal Collection, Paris.

The iconic type is also subject to history, as it has had different characteristics at different times. The Greco-Oriental icon gives us real or realistic types, whereas the Byzantine or purely Greek type, through its connexion with the idealistic Greek sculpture of the latest period and with Byzantine illuminated manuscripts, exchanges the realist principle for a generalized ideal model. We must not forget that the source of the icon is in the characteristic style adapted to the representation of departed relatives. Hence, the general outline of the portrait, its impressionism pose, its deep and thoughtful glance, turned downwards or to the side, the slightly drooping eyelids, the majestic restfulness, and a certain retirement from the outer world. All this was absorbed into the icon, and served as a foundation for the ideal features of Christ, the Virgin Mary, S. Nicholas and the like, being really a very ancient heritage from the severe religious art of Egypt. But, as Byzantine icon-painting was practised from the ninth century as a journeyman's craft, only the general scheme or type of the icon was within its reach, and it was in this shape that it spread to Russia, Georgia, Armenia, the Balkans, southeastern Europe and Italy. Later, in each of

these countries, under the influence of the efforts made by native craftsmen, this iconic scheme changes, comes to life, and likewise degenerates and loses its character.

When the pictured portrait of a saint became an icon the position it took was that of a devotional icon (*molénnyaya* from *molit' sya* to pray), that voiceless friend in the faith to whom people turned with their prayer, as if they were entrusting their prayers to him. As they prayed, they made the sign of the cross upon the breast and kissed the icon and this became the regular practice. It was just what was done when saying farewell to a martyr, when people signed themselves with the cross to signify to all around that they belonged to the Christian community and kissed him by way of farewell to the dead brother in the faith. The Church accepted the use of the icon as a pious popular custom which helped faith and gave it general support among the people, and allowed the icon to establish itself and spread, uncontrolled. At the beginning of the fifth century, the icon made its appearance in the church, initially in the *martyria*, the burial places of saints (*memoriae*) of which there were many in Egypt, Syria, near Tarsus, and elsewhere. Soon monastic communities began to supply pilgrims with mementoes, including pictures of the saints whom they honoured and representations of holy places which they had visited. Those who were devoted to a high ideal of doctrine came to Jerusalem and saw at the Holy Sepulchre the traffic in icons, little pictures, lamps, ampullae with oil from the holy places and relics and were indignant at the new idolatry, inconsolably crying out for the cleansing of the faith from superstition.[\[20\]](#) All this arose and developed on soil saturated with survivors of the ancient and oriental worlds. The same soil also gave birth to the Festival Icon with representations of those events of the Gospel such as the *Annunciation*, the *Nativity*, the *Baptism of Our Lord*, the *Transfiguration*, and the like. These events were first celebrated by services first and foremost at the places where they happened. Side by side with the paintings on the church walls, icons and portable pictures also bore representations of these events, in which the typical characteristics of the place and scene were supplied and the composition itself based upon reality. The pilgrims, when they looked at a picture of the *Baptism of Our Lord*, were reminded of the hilly banks of the Jordan and its swirling water and even of the column crowned with a cross which stood to mark the actual spot; and so the icon made for the pilgrims showed all these details. So too icons of the *Nativity of Our Lord* would show the hills of Bethlehem, the cave, and the manger, or the *Crucifixion* would have the walls of Jerusalem in the background.[\[21\]](#)



20. *The Cross Raised on Three Levels*,
Iconoclastic period, 13th century. Half-dome of the
sanctuary apse, Saint Irene Basilica, Istanbul.



21. *Menology from the Month of February*, c. 15th century.
Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt.

Remarkable is a series of icons painted on the lid of a wooden box of the sixth century from the Lateran treasure, now in the Vatican. The box is about 8 inches (20 cm.) long, shallow, and filled with a mass of wax and plaster in which are embedded pebbles and other fragments from holy places in Palestine. Five small-scale compositions show the *Ascension* and the *Resurrection* (or rather the *Women at the Sepulchre*) above, the *Crucifixion* across the middle, and below the *Nativity* and the *Baptism*. In this order the pilgrim had visited the holy

places: the church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives, the church of the Resurrection, the church of Golgotha in Jerusalem, the cave of the Nativity at Bethlehem and the banks of the Jordan. Each subject is characteristic both in composition and in the types of the figures, but here we are concerned only with the material setting. The theme of the *Resurrection* is pictured in the form of the approach of the women to the sepulchre (Mary hastens thither first of all, in agreement with the Apocrypha current at the time). Accordingly the composition shows us the gates of the small rotunda of Our Lord's sepulchre; this looks from outside like a low octagonal tower crowned by a conical metal roof like a bell-tent, with a cross at the top: the open doors allow us to see an altar with a cross upon it in the front room of the sepulchre, now the Chapel of the Angel. The sepulchre is a cave hewn out of the rock. The cover is protected from top to bottom by a grille or trellis. Above the pointed roof hangs (from the ceiling of Constantine's great rotunda, the church of the Anastasis) a circular candelabrum such as used to be called *rota*, later *corona luminis*, a hoop with openings in it to take lamps. To this day the pilgrims take away from Jerusalem as mementoes icons of the Resurrection with a picture of the modern marble canopy which contains the remains of the cave; out of its doors rises Christ, flying upwards according to the Catholic representation.

The scene of the *Nativity* gives also an ancient recollection of the cave at Bethlehem, still open and accessible from outside to pilgrims, as it was before Constantine built his great church over it. The cave is a shallow niche hewn in the rock, above it is the star, within is the manger with the Child, at the entrance on the left Mary lies on a mattress, on the right Joseph sits sleepily. Jesus at his *Baptism* is figured as a child standing in the water up to his neck. John puts his hand upon him, two disciples stand behind, on the right are two Angels offering towels and above the hand of God sending down the Dove. This is a very ancient composition, as are those of the *Ascension* and of the *Crucifixion*, with the two thieves (youthful) and the figure of Christ clothed in the purple robe. This type goes back to the fourth or fifth century. Other surviving icons point to the Syro-Egyptian origins of this kind of painting. First we must mention the well-known tradition of the *Vernicle*, the napkin at Edessa upon which the face of Christ was imprinted. We have copies of this under the names of the *Holy Mandylion*,^[22] 'the image not made with hands', and 'the holy napkin', in wall-paintings from the eleventh or twelfth centuries, and devotional icons of this type are very common in Russia from the fourteenth century. This tradition was clearly founded upon the Egyptian portraits painted upon mummy cloths. It is well known that the Byzantine icon that rose to prominence in the fifth to sixth centuries was afterwards brought to a sudden stop by the growth in the eighth

century of the iconoclastic movement, which systematically exterminated every production of the Byzantine craft to the extent that we can do no more than guess about it and search out traces of the ancient Greco-Oriental originals in the productions of late times. We have no single example of Byzantine icon-painting older than the ninth century. Of course, for the purpose of the history of the Russian icon we need not go beyond those later Byzantine examples, Russians would see and copy no icons till the tenth and eleventh centuries, but we must not shut our eyes to the changes due to the iconoclastic persecutions. We have, for instance, during the time of the iconoclasts the curious legend of the 'icon-toys' of the Empress Theodora. To judge by the account of their sizes these were little panels four or six inches long, which could be used by the icon worshippers in secret, so as not to draw upon themselves the persecutions of the iconoclasts. As if on purpose, fate has preserved for us one of these toys, an icon with the head and bust of S. Stephen, the first martyr.[\[23\]](#) It is of the seventh or eighth century, but was half destroyed in ancient times so that of the original painting only the head of the saint remains. In the tenth or eleventh century, after the veneration of icons had been restored, the shoulders were supplied in a different style and made too large in proportion to the small, neat head of the ancient type. There are many other Greek icons of about the same small dimensions as this, but they are all of later date. So, miniature Greek triptychs were made for use on journeys or for distribution to pilgrims. Hence, it appears that though the iconoclasts caused others to hide their icons away in their houses for a season, the result was a contribution to the development of the devotional icon.

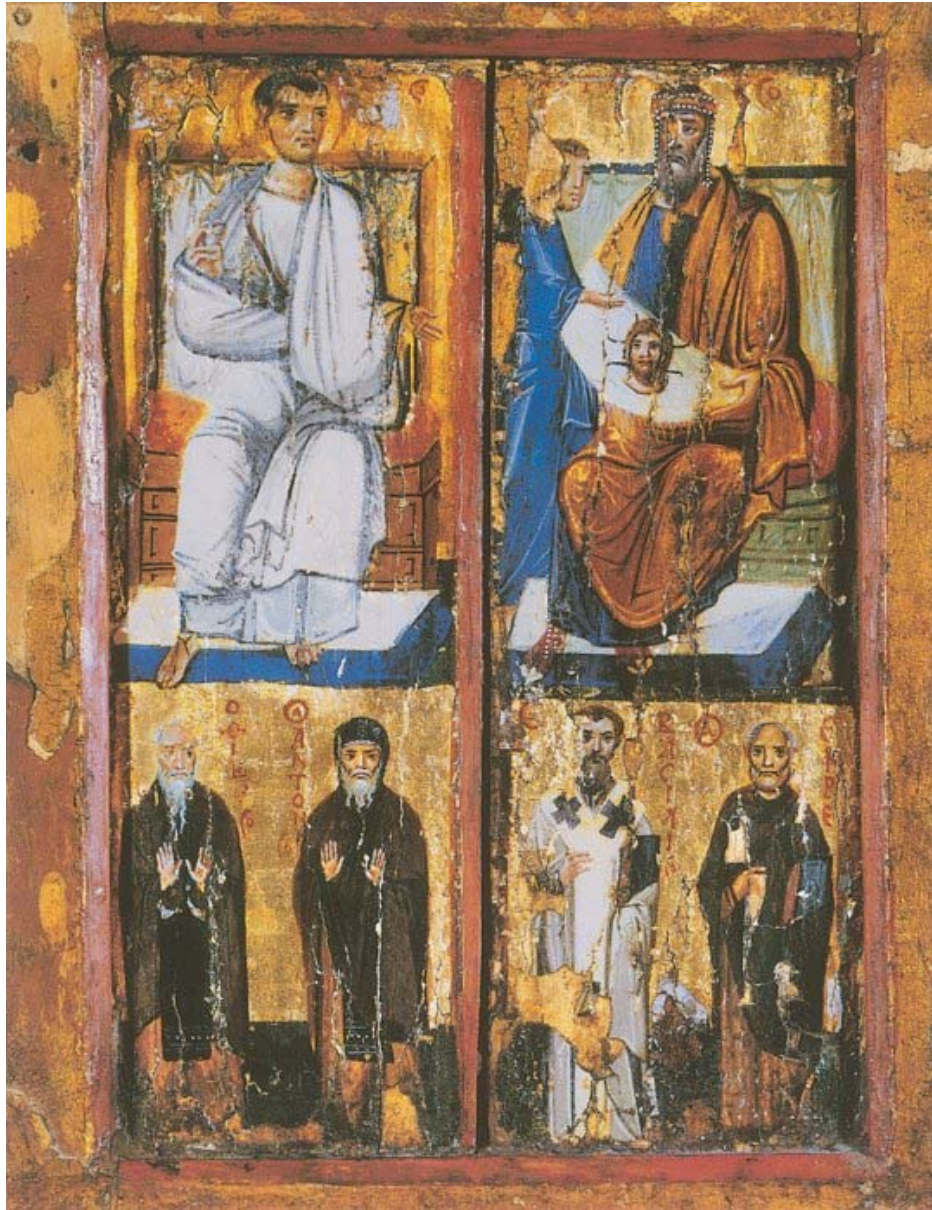
Iconoclasm was a reaction against the spread of the veneration of icons painted upon wood because these, far more than wall-paintings, put representations of God and the saints into people's hands and made them common objects. The arguments for this ideological position might then have been expected to give us a full account of the development of the painting of icons upon wood. But there is nothing of the kind. They merely tell us of exaggerated cases of icon worship: they called their opponents wood worshippers. The icons had become the objects of superstitious rites; the people were adorning them with decorations and with jewels; they were publicly censed in the churches; they were used for the healing of the sick; the sick were led to sleep in their presence and dream under their inspiration, a survival of the pagan *incubatio*. Special icons came into use to celebrate birthdays, weddings, funerals, to give form to vows and to the memory of the dead. If a well dried up, an icon was cast into it; cloth was sanctified by being spread upon an icon, they were given to the godparents at a christening; paint was scraped off an icon and mixed with bread for the Communion; the bread was laid upon an icon and used for the

Communion.

But besides these accounts of the extremes to which the venerators of icons went, we get nothing from either the attack or defence, save the commonplaces of controversy.^[24] The iconoclasts, at their council of A.D. 754, gave full expression to their teaching and the accusations-they accused recent Orthodox practice of idolatry and service of idols and cited against it all that they could find in the Bible, how that the institution of icons had no justification in the teaching of Christ or his Apostles, nor yet in the tradition of the Fathers, that there did not even exist a form of prayer for consecrating icons, the icon is not to be reconciled with serving God in spirit, the icon can only represent the human nature, it cannot and must not represent the God-man, icon-painters serve the cause of the Arian, Monophysite and Nestorian heresies; there is no ground for representing angels in human form with wings. The Blessed Virgin, the Apostles, Prophets, and Martyrs are capable of representation, but if it is impossible to represent Christ there is no need for these other icons.

When, after the first introduction of the reform, the churches had been purged of icons, the group of iconoclastic theologians and prelates considered that their demands were satisfied - the wooden icons in the churches had been set so high upon the walls that they were out of reach of 'kissing' and suchlike. But the cause of the iconoclasts was closely linked with the problems of another political struggle, that of the army and administration against the monks, their violence and excessive influence upon the affairs of the Empire and great cities. Thus cruel and senseless destruction began: icons were burnt, or the painting on them burnt off with boiling tar, they were chopped up, manuscripts with pictures were destroyed, mosaics sawn off, the libraries of the monasteries destroyed, and defenders of the veneration of icons subjected to persecution. Nor do we find in the resolutions of the Orthodox Council of A.D. 787 and in the works of the defenders of icons any definite historical proofs in their favour, only abstract arguments justifying the veneration of icons in principle: icons are no idols; they are venerable as representations of what is holy; honour paid to an icon is honour to its original. An icon of Christ represents Him in His human nature; those who reject such icons reduce the mystery of the Incarnation to a phantom. The icon teaches faith and morals and is a help to those who cannot read. The Church seeks to enlist the sense of sight to make men praise God; the icon helps this state of mind and brings people up in the love of God. There is no prayer for the consecration of an icon, but no more is there for the consecration of a cross. Just as love for our nearest and dearest creates desire for their portraits, so it is natural for Christians to have representations of Christ and the saints. The prohibition of idols in the Old Testament had a temporary validity, but the

Christian law is to last for ever.



22. *The King Abgar Receiving the Mandylion, with the Saints Paul of Thebes, Antony, Basil and Ephrem, 10th century. Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt.*



23. *The Annunciation, The Archangel Gabriel*,
18th to 19th century. Church of the Virgin Peribleptos of Ohrid
(today Church of Saint Clement), Macedonia.

There is just one single historical statement made by the defender. It concerned the tradition of the Fathers, who were undoubtedly speaking through the mouths of S. John Chrysostom and others supported the veneration of icons. The defence adduces no other references to the past, save citations of icons working wonders or specially honoured, in a series going back to the fifth century: the reason is that the iconoclasts demanded no historical review of the

subject; both sides admitted that the icon had been accepted by the Church in extreme antiquity as a pious popular custom requiring no particular control. Still, the simplest churches either did without representations and had nothing but a cross in the apse, or had only wall-paintings and curtains with figures of the Saviour and the Apostles worked upon them, but no icons. The position was evidently different by the time when S. John Damascene wrote his three discourses defending the holy icons against those who rejected them. He had to supplement the dogmatic with the historical, or practical, side of the question. He quotes the evidence of the Fathers in favour of icons, Dionysius the Areopagite, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nysa, John Chrysostom, and ends up with cases of various specially honoured and wonder working icons in early times. It is fairly clear that it was in iconoclastic times that these specially honoured ancient icons perished. It is probable that some ancient icons of the Greek Orient have survived but are not yet known to us: of them we do know only one or two, such as the genuine Byzantine Virgin *Hodegetria*, carried off from Constantinople in A.D. 1204 and preserved in S. Mark's Basilica in Venice under the name of *Nicopoea*, or the icon of *Our Saviour* in the Lateran Chapel of the Sancta Sanctorum.

However, there are few of the truly Byzantine icons of the tenth to the fifteenth centuries of which we have knowledge. Such are in the Vatican, specifically, the icon of *S. John Chrysostom* on a twelfth-century reliquary of the cross from the Lateran treasure,[\[25\]](#) and a few small icons of the fourteenth century in the Vatican Pinacotheca, in the Pisa Gallery an icon of the *Archangel Michael*; in Rome the famous *Hodegetria* in a chapel of S. Maria Maggiore and in Bologna in a church just outside the city another miraculous icon of *The Virgin*, late twelfth century. The other ancient icons venerated and preserved in various churches and monasteries of Rome, Venice, Bologna, Florence, Naples, Messina, Palermo, do not belong to the true Byzantine style and are mostly Italo-Cretan work of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries.

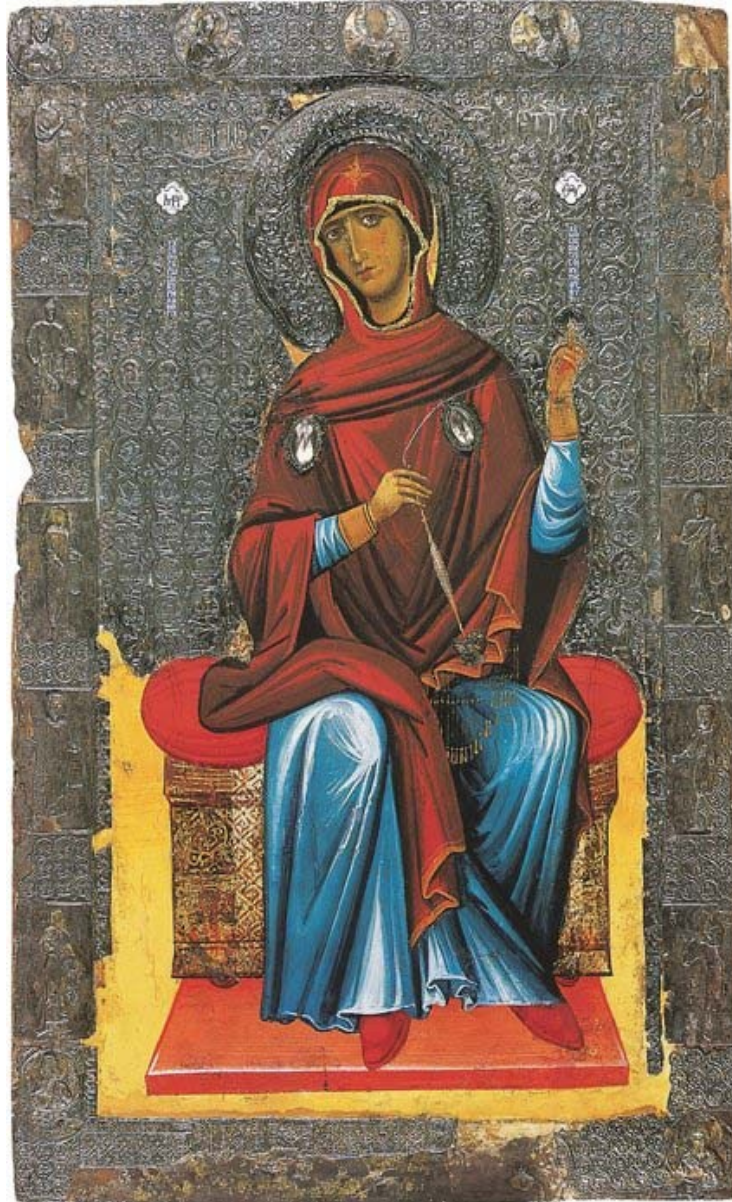
It is by a rare chance that we have several Byzantine icons preserved at Novgorod: an icon of *Ss. Peter and Paul* in the cathedral of S. Sophia; two of the *Annunciation*, one in the monastery of S. Anthony the Roman, one in the church of *Ss. Boris and Gleb*; and one of *S. George* in the monastery of S. George (Yur'ev). But even in Russia the greater number of early icons are Greek and not truly Byzantine: they go back to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and were painted in the Greek Orient. There are some actual Byzantine icons in the State Russian Museum and they may serve as a foundation for the study of the Byzantine style.[\[26\]](#) Such is the remarkable icon of *S. Gregory Thaumaturgus* (eleventh century) inscribed with his name:[\[27\]](#) with its severe style it is a

perfect substitute for the now whitewashed mosaic representations of bishops in the cathedral of S. Sophia at Constantinople. The faultless plastic drawing of the figure can scarcely be classed as painting, in view of the paleness of the colours and the slight indication of relief, but the perfect mastery with which the folds of the drapery are rendered by the above-described gradation or modelling with shadows, brighter planes, and highlights of varying tints of buff likewise recalls the mosaics of the Capella Palatina at Palermo. Unlike the mosaics, we find bright colour upon the sunburnt cheeks and lively flesh colour although the face is pale. This icon is clearly a real portrait, and in type remarkably like the icons of S. Gregory in S. Sophia at Kiev and his enamel icon on the Pala d'Oro in S. Mark's, Venice.

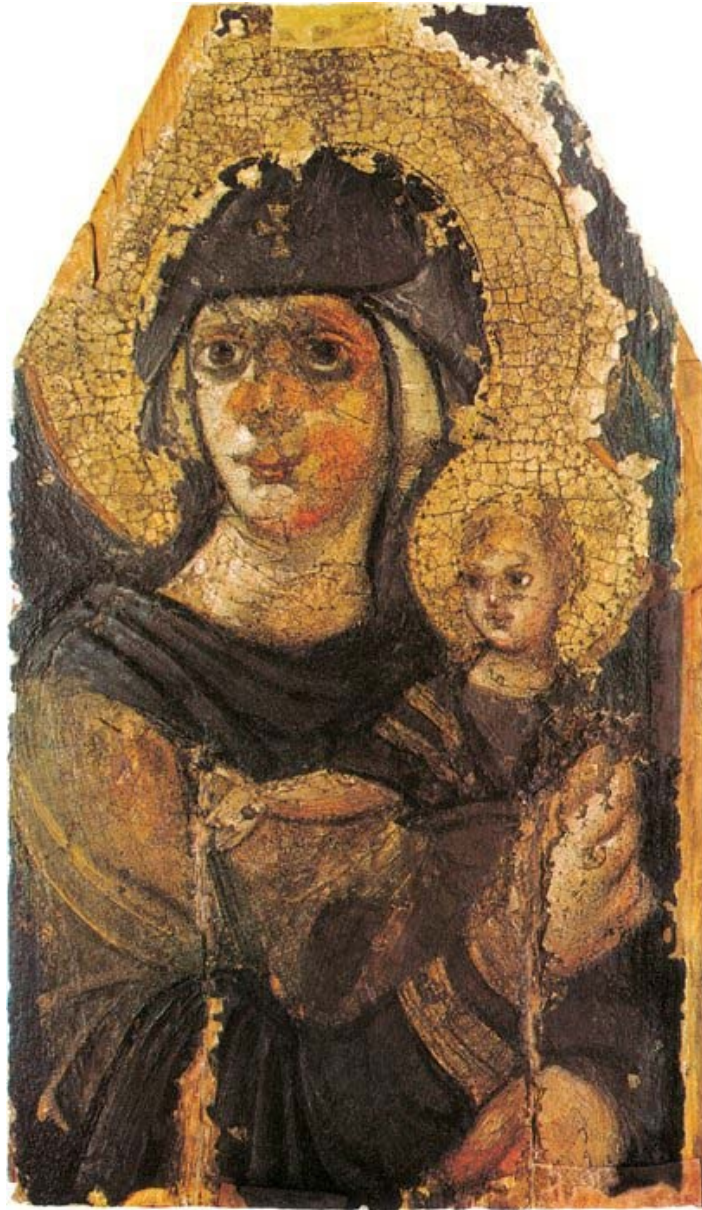
Equally precious is an icon of the *Transfiguration* which was presented to the Academy of Arts by P. I. Sevas-tiánov in the middle of the last century. Like most of the Greek or other rare specimens of his collection, he had brought it from Mount Athos. The icon, about 10 inches (25 cm.) wide, is painted on a thick oaken plank sawn out of an entablature, or rather, out of the top cornice of the iconostas of a small church or side-chapel, which it had adorned as one of a series of twelve Festivals or events of the Gospel story. They had all been painted on bright red ground, a curious peculiarity of many early icons until and including the fourteenth century. This icon, by its style, cannot be later than the tenth or possibly the beginning of the eleventh century: it is completely in the spirit of Byzantine art as restored after the iconoclastic movement. Its style is just like that of the Paris manuscripts of Gregory the Great,[\[28\]](#) only a certain sentiment in the type, peculiar to icon-painting, distinguishes it from the work in manuscripts.

But the most remarkable of all examples of Byzantine icon-painting was discovered by myself at Ochrida in the church of S. Clement in 1900:[\[29\]](#) The icons, about 40 x 28 inches (100 x 70 cm), are evidently part of the splendid old iconostas of the thirteenth or fourteenth century moved from the cathedral when it was turned into a mosque. S. Clement's had long been known for its antiquities but the icons were on the top row of the iconostas, covered with glass and half a century's dust, so that it was very difficult to distinguish them. When brought down and cleaned they proved to be in almost perfect preservation, both as regards the paintings and the silver adornments on their backgrounds and frames wonderfully wrought with repoussé figures of saints and with decorative patterns. The severely majestic half-figures of *Christ* and of the *Virgin and Child* can be paralleled only by the best mosaics of the eleventh to twelfth centuries at Daphni and Palermo, and the icon of the *Annunciation*, adorned with the very finest cloisonné enamels of the eleventh century, is of perfect elegance. The

other icons of the Virgin proved to be Serbian copies of Greco-Italian types of the *Virgin and Child* and belong only to the fourteenth century. We must pass over various small Byzantine icons mostly from Mount Athos. The dimensions of the bigger icons that are really Byzantine (excluding those of the fifteenth century which were produced under quite different conditions) may give us some idea of the part played by icons in Byzantine art. It is evident that Byzantine churches had their so-called 'fixed' icons: they were called in Russia fixed (or placed, *mêstnyya* from *mêsto*, place) icons because being permanently fixed in the intercolumniations of the iconostas, and boarded up behind, they always remained in place.²⁹ In cathedrals in Russia these fixed icons reached dimensions up to seven feet or so (2 m.) in height and breadth. In Byzantium the iconostas generally reached almost across the central nave, but as it was customary to have not less than eight or ten intercolumniations, the fixed icons were lower and much narrower than in Russia. It is more difficult to make out the sizes of devotional or house icons: icons of the Virgin, usual in this class, do not surpass 12 inches (30 cm); later they reach 24 inches. It is remarkable that in all early icons of Greek work, even the largest, the surface for the painting is sunk; either it is actually chiselled out, or else in the case of large icons a kind of frame is applied. Italo-Cretan icons and south Italian icons of a similar style have nothing of the kind. Sunken fields are found in the earlier Russian icons, especially these from Novgorod.



24. *The Annunciation, The Virgin*, 18th to 19th century.
Church of the Peribleptos of Ohrid
(now Church of St Clement), Macedonia.



25. *Our Lady with Child*, 6th century.
Encaustic on plaster on panel, 35.5 x 20.5 cm.
Museum of Western and Oriental Art, Kiev.



Use and Place of Icons in Russia

The veneration for icons in early Russia soon exceeded the bounds of ancient custom and the visual side of prayer took the form of endless bowing to icons. In the enumeration of Latin errors, which forms part of the epistle of Michael Cerularius (A.D.1054), much is made of their refusal of reverence for the 'holy icons', which was one of the most conspicuous outer signs of Orthodoxy.[\[30\]](#) However, in Russia icons attained an incomparably wider development than in Byzantium; a practically new class, that of the devotional icon (*molénnyaya*), arose (almost unknown to the Greeks except in the type of folding icons for journeys, derived from the pilgrim icons) and there came into being a great artistic craft.

This development was of course closely connected with the abundance of wood supplied by the boundless forests of northern Russia—in the east it was difficult to get hold of a panel for a big fixed icon that would not warp or split. In Russia the icon-makers showed off their mastery of woodwork in executing the orders of the Stróganovs. It should be noted that only eighteenth-century icons and common ones at that (*raskhózhiya*, made for general sale, not for particular orders) are warped 'outwards' with the painted side convex so that they split and the *shpónki* or cleats for keeping them straight fall out of their grooves at the back. Early icons of the Novgorod, Pskov and First Moscow or so-called Stróganov schools remain straight, though it is true that the straightness is sometimes attained by the restorers steaming or 'poulticing' them on one side.

At the time when Russian icon-painting in the Suzdal' and Novgorod school touched its highest point, the word 'sizable' (*mêrnaya* from *mêra*, measure) came to be applied to an icon which was of the size customary for each class of icon. This is an important point, as the term often occurs in the inventories of the

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The 'sizable' icon came in when the dimensions of the icons in the different tiers of the iconostas had become settled and the types of devotional icons more or less fixed. This fixing of dimensions resulted in a transformation of the nature of the craft: every pupil or under-workman could now copy a drawing and transfer it (*perevód* is the kind of stencil so produced) to another icon for an iconostas or oratory without having to make it larger or smaller, that is to say, without having to possess any skill in drawing. From this we can easily see why the drawing in the Novgorod school simplifies the Byzantine scheme to such a degree, whereas in the Moscow school, such rude simplification is less prevalent: of course the church iconostases were of the first importance in this, as by ready tracings they could be executed by pupils or mere journeymen.

Greek iconostases^[31] and their imitations, the iconostases of early Russia, Georgia, Armenia, and the like, consisted of marble or wooden pillars or columns, joined below by slabs (*cancelli*, *transennae*), above by an entablature: in the spaces between the columns were the large 'fixed' icons and the smaller 'Festivals'. Upon the occasion of a festival it was usual to place the appropriate icon upon a lectern or desk for the faithful to kiss: accordingly icons of this class were the most likely to be easily taken from their places and put within reach and this Greek custom was adopted in Russia. But in fifteenth century Russia, and soon after in the Greek countries, there arose a new type of iconostas with five or six tiers. This seems to be the result of the introduction of the triple icon called *Deisus*. The *Deesis* (I keep the Greek shape of the word) showed Christ enthroned with the Virgin on his right and S. John the Baptist on his left: it might consist of whole figures, half-lengths, or merely heads. As long as this was a single icon, though it spoilt the symmetry of the other 'fixed' icons, it was put in the bottom tier. When it became a triple icon, it was set above the Festivals where the Greeks (and Latins) had of old put the Crucifixion flanked sometimes by Mary and S. John the Divine.



26. *Royal Doors*, middle of the 16th century.
Regional Museum of Rivne, Ukraine.



27. *Royal Doors*, 15th to 16th century.
National Museum, Przemyśl, Poland.



28. *Saint Sergius and Saint Bacchus*, 7th century.
Museum of Western and Oriental Art, Kiev.

When the three icons of the *Deesis* were put up high, they were flanked on each side by figures of Archangels, Apostles, and Fathers. This is often called a *chin*^[32] and might form a whole *Deesis* tier, sometimes called the tier of Holy Fathers (*Svyatíteli*). Next made was the crowning tier of the Prophets on each side of the Virgin and Child. Much later, added above this, was the tier of the Patriarchs. Both these tiers might have the figures either whole or half length. They might even be fixed to the chancel arch, so as entirely to separate the apse from the nave. Above all was sometimes a row of Cherubim. The first mention of these high iconostases is in 1508.

The iconostas of the Uspenski Cathedral at Moscow provides an excellent example. In the bottom row are the Royal Doors with the *Annunciation* and the *Four Evangelists*; to the north or left of this is the *Kiot* of *Our Lady of Vladimir*, then *Our Lord*, adored by Barlaam Khutynski and brought from Novgorod in 1476, next *Our Lady of Smolénsk*: the pillar hides four ‘fixed’ icons and the door leading into the Prothesis, the door seen beyond it leads into a side-chapel; above it is a famous *Vernicle*, *Yároe Óko*; by it an icon of *S. Nicholas*, and a *Holy Trinity* round the corner. To the south of the Royal Doors is a fixed icon of *Our Lord*, also brought from Novgorod, and next it the icon of the *Dormition*, the

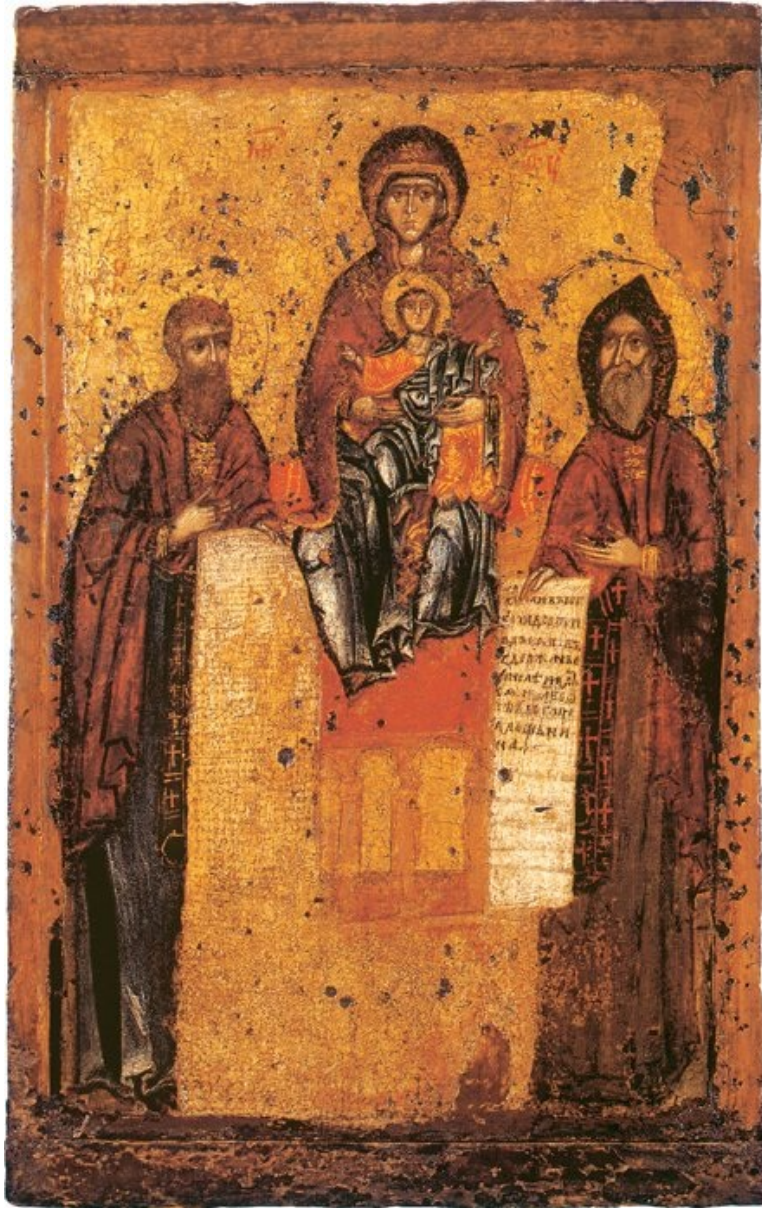
dedication feast of the cathedral; behind the pillar is the door into the Diaconicon and another into another chapel; by this, icons of the *Annunciation* and *The Queen Did Stand*. The next tier in this case is given to the *Deesis* in full form, Christ flanked by the Virgin Mary and S. John the Baptist, then the Archangels Michael and Gabriel, S. Peter, S. Paul behind the right pillars and then other Apostles. In the next tier of Festivals can be distinguished, beginning from the north, the *Birth of Our Lady*, *Her Presentation in the Temple*, the *Annunciation*, (*Nativity*, *Presentation*), *Baptism*, *Raising of Lazarus*, *Entry into Jerusalem*, *Transfiguration*, *Crucifixion*, *Descent from the Cross*, *Entombment* (*Resurrection*, *Unbelief of S. Thomas*), *Ascension* (and beyond the *Trinity*, the *Descent of the Holy Spirit*, and the *Dormition*). In the fourth tier *Our Lady Holding Emmanuel Upon her Lap* is flanked by *David* and *Solomon* and the other figures are all Prophets. In the top tier *God of Sabaoth*, with *Christ and the Dove* is in the midst of the twelve Patriarchs. The smaller iconostas of the chapel of the Nativity of Our Lady in S. Sophia at Novgorod are all of the sixteenth century. The Royal Doors are better examples, having upon their posts the Virgin and Christ, holy Bishops below, Deacons above, and the double *Eucharist* in the spandrels. The fixed icons are the *Annunciation*, *Our Lady of Vladimir*, the *Trinity*, and the *Nativity of Our Lady*. The upper tiers answer roughly to the Moscow example, but the *Deesis* has holy Bishops as well as Apostles, and the top tier has only four Patriarchs.



29. *Martyrs*, 6th to 7th century.
Encaustic on plaster on panel, 54.5 x 48.5 cm.
Museum of Western and Oriental Art, Kiev.



30. *The Archangel Michael*, end of the 11th century to the beginning of the 12th century. From the Church of Saints Cyrius and Juliette, Lagourka, Georgia. National Museum of History and Ethnography of Svaneti, Mestia, Georgia.



31. *The Virgin of the Caves "Svenskaya"*, end of the 11th century to the beginning of the 12th century.
Egg tempera on wood, 67 x 42 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



32. *The Apostle Phillip and the Saints Theodore and Demetrius*,
end of the 11th century to the beginning of the 12th century.
Egg tempera on plaster on wood, 41 x 50 cm.
The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

It would be a mistake to suppose that all these erections of icons, and iconostases, these tiers of icons, fixed icons, and groups of icons apparent throughout ancient Russian churches are merely decorative furnishing. On the contrary, as opposed to the true wall-paintings, all these tiers and groups received a definite spiritual meaning. To this day, as the pious worshipper goes round before service to venerate the various icons (called *poklónnyya* because people bend the knee before them: *poklón* is a deep bow), they are, as it were, making a pilgrimage round what early Christianity would have termed the holy *memoriae* of their church.

With the development of the tall iconostas, Russian icon-painting came to devote special attention to the Royal Doors in the centre and to the side doors in the screen which lead to the Credence and the Sacristy (*prothesis* and

diakonicon): these doors are either decorated with wood-carving or covered with icons. The Royal Doors (the name goes back to Byzantine usage[33]) had, at first, only room upon their panels for the *Four Evangelists*, but when they grew higher the *Annunciation* was added above, Gabriel on one side, and the B.V.M. on the other. From the tenth to the fourteenth centuries in both Greece and Russia this was represented upon two pillars in the sanctuary rising above the iconostas. Next, for the sake of decorative effect, they began to hang the Royal Doors upon special door-posts to support them and to set a canopy or tabernacle over them after the fashion of a *kiot*[34] or icon-shrine. It became the custom to paint upon the three surfaces of the posts series of holy Bishops and Deacons, beginning with Stephen, the first Deacon, complete with their censers and incense boxes. On the canopy was painted either the *Eucharist*[35] or the *Old Testament Trinity*;[\[36\]](#) later, under western influence, the *Last Supper*, the *Vernicle*, or *Picture Not Made with Hands*, *Our Lady of the Sign* (*Známénie*), [\[37\]](#) *Sophia the Wisdom of God*, and others. More varied and interesting were the subjects painted upon the northern and southern doors: the *Archangel Michael*, the *Guardian Angel*, the *Prophet Daniel*, the *Creation of Adam*, the *Expulsion from Paradise*, *Jacob's Ladder*, *Abraham's Bosom*, and many other subjects.

These are all edifying themes and their teaching was clear to the uneducated Christian. They were symbols telling of the doors of paradise, shut against the sinner, guarded by the Archangel with the flaming sword, but open to the soul of the just, purged from original sin and granted access to heaven.

From the sixteenth century we observe a multiplication of icons in the churches, in domestic oratories (called also *obraznáya*, a room set apart for *obrazá* – icons), in monasteries, cells and chapels, and further in the living-rooms and offices of houses, and also above entrance gates and doors. A special class of icons is that of birth-icons, which are given to children at their birth, and coffin or funerary icons given to a church and preserved in a person's memory. The icons of the Moscow Tsars fall into this category and still kept in special cupboards along the walls of the Archangel Cathedral in the Kremlin at Moscow, the burial place of the old Tsars. Specially honoured icons were protected from incense smoke and dust by curtains of light silk: in houses curtains veiled them against the doings of everyday life. The popularity of particular subjects was influenced by their use on different occasions of life, icons of the *Christ* and of *The Virgin* for the nuptial blessing, *Christ* above gates, and the *Deesis* above the entrance of the older churches. The multiplication of icons was broadly connected with the custom of having in every house an oratory, generally several glazed *kiots* filled with icons and set in the so-called

‘fair corner’ (*krásny úgol*) of a reception or a dining-room. Wealthier people would have a separate room for the oratory and in it the icons would be arranged in regular tiers with shelves for lamps to burn before them.

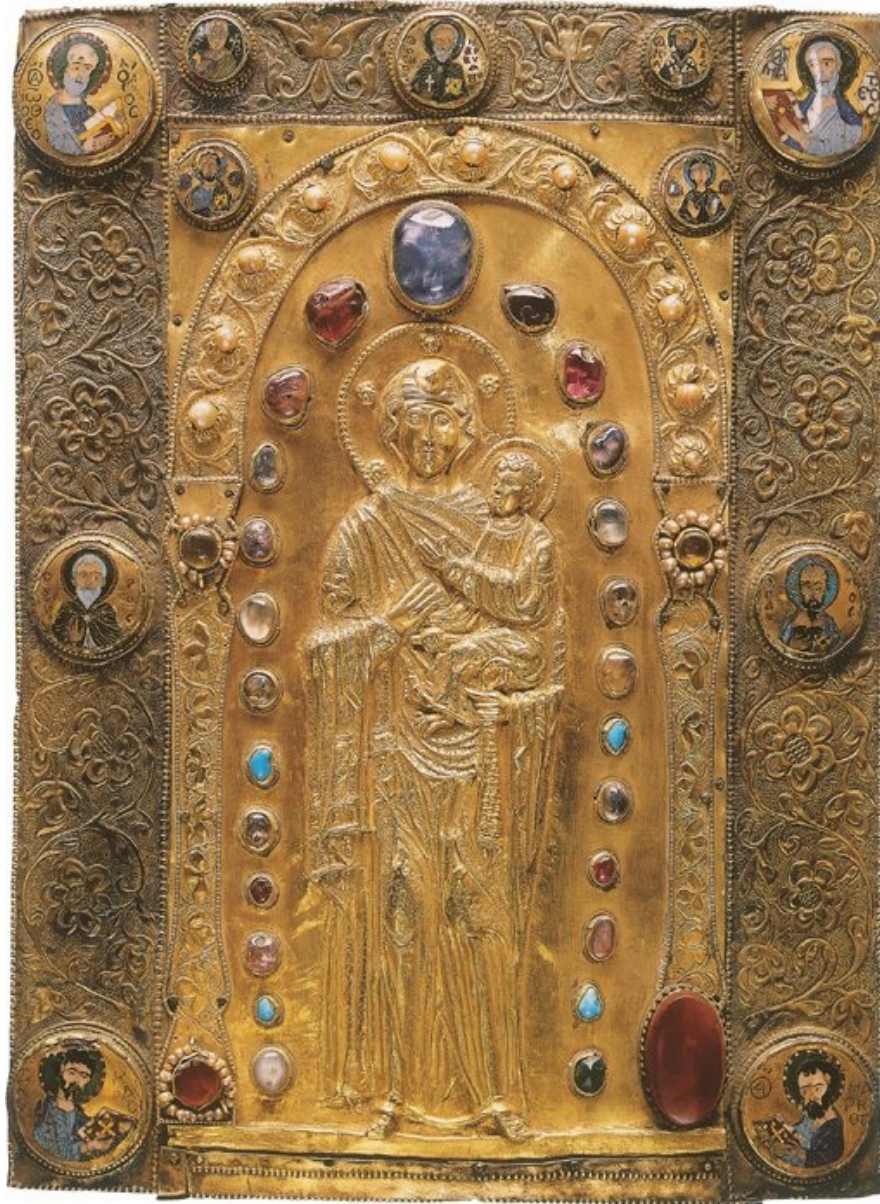
Mounting and external adornment of icons which, side by side with excellence of painting, was the subject of pious zeal on the part of donors. Even the Greeks, as early as the tenth century, yielding to the general taste for ornamental backgrounds, began adorning the whole field of the icons with stamped sheets of silver and the raised borders or true frames with similar strips of silver, which were sometimes set with jewels. The golden nimbus of early times from being flat was given relief as a halo (*vênchik*) adorned with repoussé or with filigree of twisted gold wire (*skan*) sometimes picked out with enamel (*finíff*); later the halo took the form of an actual crown. For example, the golden diadem discovered at Kiev[38] where it had been buried for safety at the time of the Mongol invasion, with its tiny enamel representation of the *Deesis*, and figures of Archangels and Apostles, is similar to the halo from a large icon but has the shape of a diadem. The zeal of donors did not stop short at these directly symbolic adornments; they began to decorate icons with silver-gilt pendants, likewise in the symbolic form of crescents (the word in Russian is hanging *tsáta*) and to the haloes they began to add earrings and strings of pearls or beads.

As long ago as the fourteenth century, under Greek influence, the Russians began to cover even the figures with plates of silver showing in more or less relief the outlines and folds of the clothes and vestments. Such a plate is called à *ríza*, properly speaking a garment, especially a chasuble[39]; they were first applied to the large ‘fixed’ icons and afterwards to those which individuals received at baptism or on special occasions. The parts of the figures left unclothed, faces, hands, and the like, all the flesh tints, show through holes in the *riza*. This is how Paul of Aleppo describes the look of the icons in the Uspenski Cathedral at Moscow: ‘All round the church and about the four piers are set great icons of which you can see nothing but the hands and faces, hardly any of the clothing can be distinguished [i.e. the painting], the rest is thick repoussé silver with niello. The greater parts of the icons are Greek.’ Paul did not distinguish between true Greek icons and copies going back to Greek originals.

Naturally even more decoration was applied to the devotional icon in private hands: this came to stand not merely as a symbol or sign, but a kind of household protector and defender; against evil spirits and the invasion of the Devil, icons of the *Martyr S. Nicetas*, the vanquisher of evil spirits; against fiery conflagration, the figure of *Elias the Prophet* or his *Ascent in a Fiery Chariot* or else of *Our Lady the Burning Bush*; against murrain among cattle, the icon of S. Blaise (Vlási); from sickness, S. Panteleimon; from sudden death, S.

Christopher.

Under Peter the Great the Russian bishops were carried away by his movement for reform and enlightenment in the direction of Protestantism and a purging of faith and ritual and gave the clergy directions to clear the icons of unnecessary 'additions'. The result was a general reduction of ancient objects in churches, especially of icons valuable for their antiquity or for their mountings. Pearls taken off icons are (or were) shown by the bushel in rich monasteries.[\[40\]](#) At the same period, there came to an end the perpetual care which is necessary to keep icons from decay and universal destruction set in. An icon requires careful preservation; it must have a more or less steady temperature and suffers from variations in it and also from excessive moisture and dust. The thin layer of gesso that carries the paint swells up, cracks, and scales off, so that many places are left bare. Dust does significant damage, especially if an icon is horizontal, or if a dusty icon gets alternately damp and dry. In the old days the icons were looked after; in the palaces of Moscow there was an Office of Icons (*obraznáya paláta*, from *obraz* – icon) which collected old icons and contained shops for mending and cleaning them. Of course, it must be granted that this looking after icons and frequent cataloguing of them led to a general repainting in order to restore them and freshen up the colours, so that an old icon could be returned in a new style.



33. *Our Lady Hodegetria*, 10th to 17th century.
Gold, gilded silver, wood, enamels, pearls,
precious and semi-precious stones, 32 x 33 cm.
Art Museum of Georgia, Tbilisi, Georgia.



34. *Saint Luke the Evangelist*, 1056-1057.
Miniature of the Ostromir Gospel.
The National Library of Russia, St. Petersburg.



35. *The Synaxarium of the Three Hierarchs*, 1073.
Miniature of the Sviatoslav Collection.
Museum of History of Moscow, Moscow.



36. *Saint Luke the Evangelist Painting the Icon of the Virgin*,
second half of the 16th century. 45 x 36 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



The Technique

Judged by strictly aesthetic standards the Russian icon, in its composition and drawing, lies in a special 'sacred province' outside the ordinary historical conditions to which secular painting answers. This province is not concerned with nature, the ultimate model of the secular painter, nor with perspective or anatomy. The iconic sphere provides a scheme which possesses a majesty consisting of the rejection of the world, of the painters' illusion, the expression of feeling, the attraction of ideal types. The mere repetition of the same forms and types confers a certain sanctity upon icon-painting and gives all that it performs the character of a conscious service to the transcendental.

All these attributes of icon-painting are derived from the history of Byzantine art; they show the progress of this art in a series of glorious works in mosaic, illumination, ornamented walls of marvellous beauty, decorative objects, fine carving in ivory and in gold. In all these branches it reached high perfection. Is Russian icon-painting to be regarded as a repetition of Byzantine craftsmanship, or has it its own history, its own departures from the Byzantine original, its own national features? This is the problem before us when we try to characterize the Russian icon. Over the course of four centuries we find it in Rublëv's drawing, the Novgorod manner, the drawing of Dionysius, that of the Stróganov school, the Frankish method and the like, and icon-painters distinguish a still greater number of so-called manners (*pis'mo*). However, these may be only variations of one style, and for this reason, before proceeding to a historical grouping, we must consider the characteristics of the drawing from the point of view of general art history[\[41\]](#).

Drawing is linked closely to composition, as the latter depends most directly upon drawing. But as Russian icon-painting took over the composition ready-

made from the Greek, people are wrongly given to think that drawing in Russian icon-painting remained Greek all the while, as if right up to the end of the sixteenth century it was impossible to speak of Russian drawing. When we come to the icons of Nóvgorod we shall find ourselves unable to maintain that; in them we have nothing but Byzantine drawing. Exact comparison will prove that even the mechanical tracings of a head and shoulders figure of a saint led to confusion and changes of the Greek drawing. Only now that we have gained a real knowledge of Byzantine iconography^[42] are we in a position to state that it is, in spite of all its faults of drawing and expression, not only complete but final, as all attempts on the part of painters to make new groupings have only led to want of clearness and characterisation of the subjects.

These compositions were developed over, and served their purpose for, centuries. Only in the seventeenth century do we hear of icon-painters at the Russian court who were also designers (*známenshchik*), kept to carry out commands in the artistic province, but these commands were for designs for vessels, household objects, and trappings, especially the emblematic designs then so fashionable about Europe. No one ever thought of developing new religious subjects; they all painted after the icon fashion, learning to draw from the icon models and within the limits of icon-painting. This made it possible for even poor craftsmen to draw and paint icons with elaborate detail and with many figures. None the less, they spoilt the figures to the last degree especially when towards the end the supremacy of the Frankish style introduced lively, free, and dramatic poses, and accordingly the human figure was painted in different manners at different times.



37. *Andreas Pavius, Christ Pantocrator,*
end of the 15th century. Teutonic Cemetery, Vatican.



38. *Christ Pantocrator*, 1363. Egg tempera
on plaster on wood, 106 x 79 cm.

The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.

Besides this, the setting, although it only had the same two words, *paláty* – buildings, and *górkí* – hills, to express its two main kinds, also changed in character. The buildings were at first painted in accordance with the Greek custom, two porticoes joined by a wall or by a curtain making a conventional, pseudo-classical scene for the action to take place. But even in the Nóvgorod style the buildings are different; churches appear and often have local views.

More permanent was the vogue of the background in the shape of two mountains, one to the right supposed to be towards the east and illuminated by the rosy light of the sunset, the other to the west overspread with the on-coming darkness expressed by the complementary lilac or bluish reflexion. Usually these two mountains make up the desert as the Greeks understood it; they placed there hermits, prophets, and holy men and made it the scene of the deaths of martyrs. But we shall see that even at Nóvgorod, they drew the saints standing upon marble floors or on carpets, following Italian models; later come fields with flowers; as the buildings give place to views of the city, so the mountains become rounded hills. All these points serve to mark the various manners distinguished by the modern icon-painters.

Be this as it may, the main thing is the actual drawing and the essence of this is the power to make the sketch or outline of the figure and face. Icon-painters have from early times, it seems, divided this into the drawing of the face (*lichnoe* from *lik* or *litsó* 'face') and the preliminary drawing that comes before the face (*dolíchnoe*), *i.e.* the backgrounds and figures. The mere pupil (*dolíchnik*) who paints the preliminary part leaves the faces to be put in and the work finished by the skilled craftsman or face-painter (*lichnik*) even in detailed and many-figured icons, much more so in icons with only one figure[43].

Moreover, from the sixteenth century on, the free painting which executed icons on wood and schemes of wall decoration, gave way to a certain extent to mechanical reproduction by means of tracings from icons pierced, with soot which transferred the main lines of the drawing to the damp gesso. Such tracings, stencils, or patterns were collected by the painters and formed the basis of the *Litseye Pódlinniki*, of which the best was found in the remote monastery of Siysk near Archangel. The pattern here illustrated is the work of Basil Kondakov of Usolye, who collected many others. This represents the composition called the *New Testament Trinity* and also *Paternity* and bears both titles[44]. It is copied from a design by the great icon-painter Simon Ushakóv which appeared as the first Russian etching. Characteristically in tracing it has been reversed, God the Father should have Christ on his right, and the cross is clearly the wrong way round. It was probably traced from the centre of a great composition of the *Creed* or the *Last Judgement*. These patterns often have indications of the colours to be used on different parts. The design is originally western, and the representation of the dove is most peculiar[45]. It is possible that that such a mechanical copy gave no scope for change, and of course in these reproductions the Greek design preserves its general character. But the human hand has to go over the whole of the mechanical copy and in course of time the copy or reproduction suffers change.

We see in the wall-paintings of Kiev, Pskov, Nóvgorod and Ládoga how different the types, costumes, and trappings are from the true Byzantine originals, and we are right in seeking their originals – not in the monuments of Constantinople but in the work on the Balkan Peninsula, in Asia Minor, and even in the productions of Greco-Oriental icon-painting. Evidently, the earliest Russian icon-painting worked in two manners; one a severe, definite, and plastic manner close to Byzantine (Constantinopolitan) art in its refined style of the tenth to twelfth centuries, and another broad and simple with straight vertical folds of the drapery and coarse patches of red upon the pale cheeks of the faces.



39. Angelos, *Christ Pantocrator Enthroned*,
end of the 15th century. Teutonic Cemetery, Vatican.



40. *The Crucifixion*, 12th century. National Museum of History and Ethnography of Svaneti, Mestia, Georgia.

By the end of the fourteenth century the Russian icon had reached its full stature and, at the same time, took on such different characteristics that we can distinguish them clearly, guiding ourselves by a certain basis common to the different branches and then marking off the more definite types and establishing their models. The Byzantine drawing had by now fallen to pieces and with its exaggerated refinements it had become unintelligible to the craftsmen and beyond their execution. However, it just happened that the early Greco-Oriental

models had simplified the design and worked out a new scheme; how far this was the case we can see by comparing the complicated folds of the Apostles' clothing, *chiton* and *himation*, in Byzantine icons and the same in Russian icons of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. A whole series of half-figures of Christ preserves the Byzantine type but has changed the ordinary drawing of the drapery: on Christ's left shoulder there hangs down in the form of a triangle a corner of the *himation* thrown under that shoulder when the cloak was draped round the body from behind, whereas that angle should have been covered in its turn by the last end of the cloak thrown round over the shoulder: the natural order has been disregarded for the sake of effect. Further, at the edge of the right arm a saint's *himation* makes a tiny segment which ought either to go to the left shoulder or be thrown under the arm and pass across the chest, but it is not clear quite how it falls. We shall see what new and complicated difficulties arose from Byzantine drawing of drapery as remodelled by Rublëv in imitation of the Greek Theophanes. But the drawing of the Nóvgorod icons of the fifteenth century is quite different and comparatively crude: to compare it with the magnificent, if contorted, figures of the wall-paintings is to bring us from an artistic world to one of journeymen.

Let us take the half-length of *S. Thomas* which at first sight looks Byzantine in style, so much are the *chiton* and *himation* 'broken up' by a series of folds, angular, tight and dry, and so much are these folds covered with bright planes and these planes emphasized by highlights of white lead. Further, the hand, painted as in the Greek icons in the act of blessing, the sturdy broad-shouldered body, the youthful head with its sharp oval, and the line round the eyes, everything is Greek. But this is set against what appears to be pupils' work, the figure has clearly no chest, the drapery is, as it were, hung on the back of a chair or cut out of tin-plates, some of the folds quite unintelligible, and the head is too small for the body.

What a difference there is in the figure and drapery of the *Archangel Gabriel* in the State Russian Museum, which, however, belongs to the early fifteenth century and is part of the *Deesis* tier of the old iconostas in the Súzdal' Cathedral. The body has delicately sloped shoulders, unlike the ordinary Byzantine type; the face keeps the characteristic Attic oval, but is bent downwards in deep thought. Unlike the Byzantine, the drapery is all soft with wide folds. Clearly we have before us a new style using the forms of the Greek iconography, the style of the Italian *trecento*; hence the feminine look of the Archangel, with his hair done in thick locks like a woman's. The technique of the actual painting is quite different, the lighted planes are few and not sharp, fine gradations of half-tones model the folds and the whole manner is already

‘fused’ as it will be in the sixteenth century.

These are one or two examples of transitional manners of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries: there is no need for the moment to go through the different varieties of Byzantine, Russo-Byzantine, or Greco-Oriental icons, nor yet the local Russian schools of Nóvgorod and Súzdal’, nor to touch on the special points of drawing in the icons of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. When we come to these groups in their historical order their varieties will appear of themselves. Now we only wish to show that in judging of the drawing in icons we must fix our attention not on what it has in common with the Byzantine, but on the historical distinctions and changes.

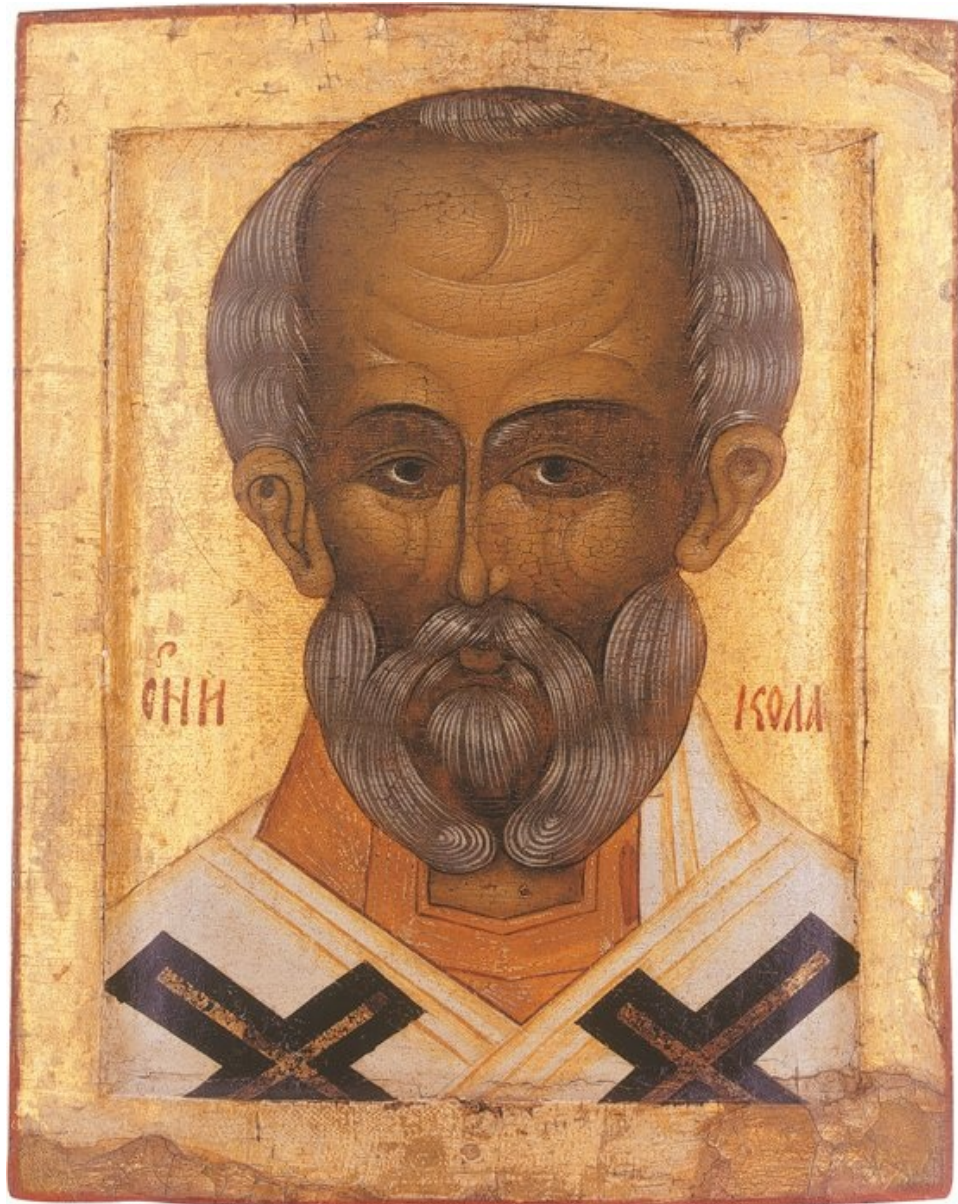
Artistic drawing is not only the expression of its epoch and the influences dominant therein, but also of its nation and place. The history of art which puts before us in historical development Italian, French, and German drawing shows us that drawing must be national and likewise individual; it is however significantly more complicated than, say, handwriting, in that we can often do no more than observe the national type in a drawing. When we come to the icon with the knowledge that there is a mechanical copy underlying every considerable drawing, we might expect to have to give up all search for national character, whereas even in the drawing we do perceive national traits and this opens to us a very special side of the craft which brings it into very close connection with a true art.

The Russian icon-painter set himself the task, before everything else, of precisely imitating his Greek model; giving no play either to his pupil or to himself, he tried to make an exact copy. From the sixteenth century on we hear how the icon-painters sought this model; it made them buy old icons, it forbade any venture to paint even small details in their own fashion instead of the Greek – for instance the contour of the eyes – they were afraid to begin any innovation lest it should be a ground of accusation against them. Yet, all the while, the icon was getting a national tinge, and often it was the head and face which showed it first, next the figure, and only towards the end in a period of decline is there any change in the clothing, the ancient conventional raiment being modified by new influences. The changes of course affect the less prominent details: for instance, while the curly hair of S. George survives as a characteristic point of the saint, the slight wave in that of S. Nicholas may be gradually lost.

If then we are asked the source and cause of such a change in the characteristic Greek types, we can point, first of all, to the series of miraculous and specially revered icons. You might think that these were the ones which would be most exactly copied, but as a matter of fact it is in these in which we find most frequently and most clearly a change in type. It is evident that, in

accordance with a custom which early gained acceptance, patrons were almost always inclined to choose for their own devotion some miraculous icon that they specially revered and knew very well. Such icons would be copied more often than others, and more often than in the case of others would a copy serve as a model for further copying, and, as a result, the process of modification was especially swift. The human hand, as it follows the stencil mechanically traced from the original, tends to modify its lines after its national character and even after a definite manner of icon-painting which suggested to the painter definite features of the iconic type. If we take the type of *S. Nicholas Thaumaturgus*, whose innumerable Russian icons show evident signs of Greek tradition, this tradition can be exemplified and confirmed by a whole series of early Byzantine pictures in wall mosaic (Daphni, S. Luke in Phocis, S. Sophia at Kiev), and portable mosaic (Stavro-Nikita^[46], Kiev Theological Academy, replicas in the Khanenko Collection at Kiev (xi-xii c) and also at Burtscheid near Aachen).

The points that distinguish the type of S. Nicholas make him sturdy of build, with sparse flesh, grey but still virile. His head is rather square, his face a broad oval, short hair with a wave in it, a small round beard, a high open forehead, a severe but restful expression. He is vested in a *felón'*: in later examples he wears the *sakkos* with crosses upon it and the *omofór*. Nóvgorod icons follow the miraculous copy honoured in the cathedral of Nicholas-in-the-Court (*na dvómitse*) at Nóvgorod and vest the saint in *felón'*. The Moscow icons apparently go back to the miraculous image of Nicholas of Zaráysk, which, according to tradition, was brought from Korsún' in A. D. 1224, and shows the saint in a *sakkos*.^[47] The former icon is Greek, the latter a Russian copy from the Greek. The main type has been preserved, but the face; in this area Russian icons have been Russianised and, in some cases, show the Nóvgorod type. Further, in the older icons the folds are stricter and most correct, in later ones they get confused and tightened. Evidently the painter entirely fails to understand the folds of the light woollen stuffs of which the *felón'* was made: further he does not distinguish between the *felón'* and the *himation* and makes the folds of the *felón'* vertical in accordance with his scheme for the *himation*.



41. *Saint Nicholas*, beginning of the 16th century.
Icon Museum, Recklinghausen, Germany.



42. *Saint George Slaying the Dragon*, 15th century.
Egg tempera on wood, 114 x 79 cm. From the Church
of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, Lviv region.
National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kiev.

Russian icon-painting, however, passed through certain periods when its schools had few models to follow, or had no other icon craftsmanship but that of bands of journeymen either wandering on their own account or specially invited to execute the wall-painting of a church, and, that done, to make the iconostas. How, in such times, did the local craftsmen with no models and no schooling

progress? This was the position of Nóvgorod in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when it had to content itself almost exclusively with its own craftsmanship; it was only at the end of the fifteenth century that it could develop it by means of models from outside. We can see the impact of this in two icons in the State Russian Museum representing two Fathers of the Church, *Ss. Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria*, who have festivals on the same day (18 Jan.) and are, therefore, portrayed together. Both icons date from the end of the fifteenth century, but one is of Greek origin, the other a Nóvgorod copy of an original almost similar to the former. True, the Russian copyist has put both patriarchs into the *sakkos* (*polistávri*) instead of the *felón'* of the original, and simplified the adornments of the *omofór*, stole, and *epigonation*, but he has painted the under vestment after the Greek model and preserved perfectly the shape of the heads and features, though changing the position of the figures about. A curious detail is that the Russian icon-painter has kept the ancient two-fingered position of the saints' right hands in blessing, whereas the Greek has followed Byzantine iconography which, except in the case of the Saviour, avoids the three-fingered form and adopts the position of the fingers which expresses the name of Christ. This preservation of the ancient attitude of blessing in the Russian Church is very important historically, the testimony of icons being a support to the schismatics who refused to accept this among other innovations of the Patriarch Nikon[\[48\]](#).

But in the Russian icon the figures have, as it were, deadened under the hand of the journeyman—all the free mastery of the Greek artist has vanished; no trace is left of the subtle expression of the saints' sideways glance, nor of the variety in the way the hands are held up in blessing. The spirituality and intelligence shown in the faces of two of the greatest teachers of the Church have given way to a gloomy and parched asceticism. We cannot, however, deny a certain adaptation of the faces to the Russian type and a restrained simplicity about the whole in place of the Greek affectation. We might come to the conclusion that we have to do with a Russian copy of rude journeyman's work, but this would be mistaken: the icon itself gives a definite indication that it comes from the best Nóvgorod painting-shop. We find this exemplified in the characteristic pattern of the field upon which the two figures stand: sprays, rods, and dots disposed in a regular order form a carpet pattern. Specifically, this kind of pattern occurs on a whole series of particularly well-painted icons in the State Russian Museum. They were copied from Italian icons which followed the religious pictures of the Italian masters of the *quattrocento*.

To judge how the drawing changes in a rough journeyman copy let us compare the remarkably artistic Greek icon of the *Prophet Elias* with the

Russian icon of the Nóvgorod school. Of course, the Russian icon is only in a sense a distant copy of the Greek one; its immediate model was a journeyman Greek icon of which many were painted in the Greek Orient and in the Balkans, just as they were at Nóvgorod and in the north of Russia. The scene represented is the flight of the Prophet into the desert in accordance with the Word of the Lord (1 Kings xvii), and his being fed by ravens at the brook Cherith. The painter has combined in one all the places in the Bible that tell of how Elijah took refuge in the desert from the wicked deeds and persecutions of Ahab and Jezebel, and represents him in a moment of pain and grief when he has turned round at a slight noise and sees the raven bringing him a small loaf. Between two lofty rocks in the mountains, at the mouth of a deep cave, the weary prophet has sits in deep dejection leaning his head on his hand. Suddenly he hears the noise of the raven's wings, turns his head and sees the raven, but is not surprised at it and his left arm still rests quietly upon his knees.

Both the rocks and the clothes of the prophet are brightly coloured in shades of brown and only the slabs of rock are picked out with complementary pale green shadows and whitish highlights. In Nóvgorod painting these slabs with cleavage planes are preserved and are called 'little heels' (*pyátotchki*). The pale blue lights on the edges of the folds of the chiton bring out the relief of the figure. Above the chiton is thrown a sheepskin fastened round the throat. Extremely characteristic is the rendering of the heavy massive body, the bony and muscular frame of the tall ascetic: his shaggy hair falling down to his shoulders and his beard spreading out on both sides, harmonising with his sunburnt brick-red face and small head. The general type can only be compared with the well-known type of S. John the Baptist in Greco-Russian icon-painting and perhaps also with S. Jerome in Leonardo's picture, where he put on the first coat of brown for the anchorite's body and then probably left the picture as it were purposely unfinished.

The comparison of a Greek original with its later copies will show much about the Russian style; in particular, will make clear to us the simplification of the original which comes about when a journeyman undertakes cheap work. Such is the case in the scheme of rocks and ledges, in the pose of the figure and the drawing of chiton and sheepskin, in the roughness of the face with the head scarcely indicated. But there is one new and characteristic point: the right arm is pressed closely to the breast. So we get a less remote, a more familiar figure of a pious abbot who, not without almost reckoning on it, is accepting the miracle of God's gift. Vanished is the prophet, the great eremite, his moments of grief and despair, vanished too is the special mark of his deep faith and with it the artistic beauty of the icon.

Colouring and Pigments in Russian Icon-painting

Just as the philological way of studying remnants of antiquity has given way to the archaeological, so now in the history of painting the time has come for a full study, beginning with the theme and the drawing and ending up with the colours. Now that the technique of reproduction in colours has eliminated the hand and become entirely photographic and mechanical, the time has come for science can take into account the historical succession of colouring and pigments and accordingly to make, in icon-painting, a satisfactory distinction between different schools.

Russian icon-painters still distinguish in the history of their craft various schools-Nóvgorod, Pskov, Early Moscow and Stróganov. They base the distinctions upon the colouring; more exactly the flesh tints (in the language of icon-painting (*v*) *okhrénie* 'ochre coat'), which are defined as bright, pale, red, or dark. Further, an icon-painter, after specifying the ochre-coat, pays attention to the tone of the *sankir* 'flesh priming', as he calls the ground coat under all bodies and faces, covered indeed by the ochre layer but appearing in places as a fundamental shadow tint. The reason for this is clear-being unable to study all the details of the drawing, the icon-painter fixes on the visible details of *okhrénie*, just as students of the history of Western painting traditionally paid special attention to fine shades of difference in the flesh tints. In both cases this method fails to furnish sufficient data, and in important cases connoisseurs study the drawing of hands and fingers, ears and such like to find proofs of their ascription of a painting or drawing to a particular artist. At this point we must recall what has already been said of how the basis of the icon is to be thought in a natural portrait painted for quickness' sake by the encaustic or wax process. We know further that the progress of this form of painting was a striving for depth and richness of colouring as well as in an airy softness of tint in order to gain a life-like impression, its warmth of flesh tints, and the attractive force of the eyes with their look either penetrating or reflective. The contrasted shadows on the cheeks, brow, and nose, and the bright surfaces on the folds of the draperies gave wax-painting opportunity for rendering a close observation of nature. First, a dark tone was laid on, next the shadows put in with a contrasting light blue and the two patches with their different colours and values were softened by the hot iron, pressed out, to some extent mixed, and this very softening process did away with the sharp edges of the first laying on and blended the tones into a general harmony. The laws of icon-painting demand the

same effects, but with the egg or tempera technique they can only be attained in a solid fashion by a long process of laying on one coat after another in gradually heightened tones[\[49\]](#).



43. *Saint George* (Double-sided icon), Kiev School,
end of the 11th century to the beginning of the 12th century.
Egg tempera on lime wood, 174 x 122 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



44. *The Prophet Elias in the Desert*, 14th century.
Egg tempera on plaster on wood, 35.5 x 28 cm.
The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

As early as the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the well-known treatise by the monk Theophilus on various arts was available. It dealt with, in the first chapter, – the mixture of colours for the production of flesh tints, that is, the *okhrenie*, the colour comprised of white lead, vermilion (cinnabar), red ochre, black, etc., he calls *membrana*. In this complicated recipe, with its directions as to what should be mixed with which and what must be added later, the part which interests us

most is the first coat, which is made of white lead burnt until it gives a yellow or greenish (*prasinum*) colour[50]. This is precisely the darkish, greenish-olive coat which, both in miniatures and in icon-painting of the Greco-Italian school, forms the first coat and underlies the flesh tint made of a mixture of white lead and vermillion, burnt red ochre, and red lead. The green shows at the edges round the oval of the face and along the nose and makes the shadow; it is for the tenth to thirteenth centuries the mark of Byzantinism in painting. The Greek Painters' Guide of Dionysius of Fournas shows that the *proplasma* of Panselinos might likewise be called *okhrenie*, being made of white lead, ochre, and green with an addition of black[51]. Flesh colour, when lighted, is made of white lead and red ochre; the region of the eyes beginning with the dark sinking of the orbit is done in black mixed with ochre or umber with red ochre. The Russian Painters' Guide (*Pódlinnik*), under the heading 'how to paint the faces of icons', gives the following directions: 'To make *sankir*, ochre and black: to make the first coat of ochre for faces, mix in white lead, vermillion and red: for the second coat make the ochre lighter: to make shadows mix in a little black and put the shadows in. The icon-painters distinguish, in various styles, *sankir* of various shades and compositions, but agree in denoting by it a dark tint serving as the ground colour for flesh, yet they do not know the origin and meaning of the word.

A second criterion of different schools the modern icon-painters themselves find in is the so-called *ozhivki* (from *ozhivát*, 'to enliven'), a special kind of whitish highlight which, in the form of fine, curly or hooked lines of a pale mixture of colours or even actual white, 'enlivens' the light places by the eyes, on the forehead, nose, lips, and even on the joints of the fingers. Frequent use of these distinguishes the severe Greek manner of the old schools and their number decreases century by century from the fourteenth to the seventeenth, though they continue to survive right through the course of Russian icon-painting as an accepted convention. As a matter of fact, these *ozhivki* rarely add to the real effect of the painting by bringing out the appearance of high relief; they merely make the surface spotty and are connected in one's mind with the severe school. Even in the seventeenth century, in the big independent icons, they cover the prescribed places on the muscles about the eye and upon the forehead with rows of fine patches of pigment, as it were a luxuriance of finishing work without need or sense. In such rows they receive from the icon-painters the name of *dvizhki* (from *dvigat*, 'move'). A great many such little patches in the case of an icon of poor execution gives a look of boniness to faces, fingers, and limbs.

We have already seen that, in contradiction to the encaustic painting with its rich deep tones[52], there existed the parallel art of wall-painting with its light tones. This occasionally passed into a mere 'colouring' or 'illumination' of the

figures in flat tones with no gradation, meaning there was no real modelling, or merely, a faint lightening of the tones on the big folds of the drapery. This 'fresco' scale of light tones finds its way into icon-painting from time to time when the supply of truly iconic models fails, as for instance in the icon-painting of Nóvgorod and northern Russia. The pale style has its coat of pale ochre, whereas the rich colouring has red ochre.

The Greco-Italian icon-painting in the latter half of the fourteenth century and in the fifteenth had under the hands of Paolo and Lorenzo Veneziano and Catarino worked out a warm iconic colouring which gave rise later to the colouring of the great Giorgione. It was not merely the natural surroundings of Venice, the deep, rich evening colouring of the Venetian lagoons, but also the decorative beauty of Greco-Oriental icons adopted by Greco-Italian icon-painting that, as we shall see below, provided the historical foundation for Venetian colouring. The earliest channels by which the lost period of Greco-Oriental painting exercised its influence were the Korsun' icons; next we have a series of icons with dark ochre flesh, and this is followed by a great influx of Greco-Italian, more particularly Venetian icons which awoke a lively movement in the Russian schools.

The unusual phenomenon of two-coloured reflexes in Greco-Italian and Nóvgorod icon-painting was observed long ago, not as 'reflexes' or reflexions of complementary light on the folds of drapery, but as a 'special form of high light' (*probêl* [53]) produced not with white but with other colours. So, following the directions of the Russian Podlinnik, he remarks that in Nóvgorod work of the sixteenth century on a garment coloured maroon (*bakán*) the folds are streaked with blackish green. But when he describes light blue garments as lightened (*probêleny*) with maroon and dark blue with purplish red (*bágor*) he is in error. His mistake is due to *probêl* being essentially a lightening whereas the dark red tints are used for shadows and not for bright areas. We know something of this practice of using brown colours for drapery with bluish reflexes as far back as the early Christian mosaics in Cyprus, the church of S. Praxed at Rome, on the Virgin's raiment in the chapel of Venantius in the Lateran[54]. Even the Italian fresco of the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries knows the use of greenish reflexes on reddish draperies, still earlier in S. Angelo in Formis in the Neapolitan Campagna where it comes from the Greek Orient[55]. It is important to bear in mind that in the true Byzantine miniatures and frescoes reflexes in complementary colours are not encountered; here reigns the ordinary system of highlights (*probêl*).



45. *The Archangel Gabriel*, 1387-1395.
Egg tempera on plaster on canvas mounted on wood,
146 x 106 cm. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



46. *The Archangel Gabriel*, (panel from a Deisis),
beginning of the 15th century.
National Museum, Lviv, Ukraine.



47. Leonardo da Vinci, *Saint Jerome*, 1482.
Tempera and oil on wood, 103 x 75 cm.
Pinacoteca Vaticana, Vatican.

Finally, all through the icon-painters are therefore right from an historical point of view in basing the distinctions they draw between various styles and manners (*póshib*, a smaller class than *pis'mó*) in Russian icon-painting upon colours, for the colouring really is the criterion of independence and creativeness. As a matter of fact it is most important to realize that I, for instance, know of only one single Russian icon which is an absolute copy of a

Greek original. This is the icon of the *Nativity of Our Lord* in the church at Pskov; it is exactly like a Greek icon in the State Russian Museum; the only difference is in the inscriptions. Naturally such copies if they did exist were only single examples, all other icons were executed in various painting-shops by means of tracings. Besides, we see nowadays that icon-painters learn the drawing and the colouring of one particular manner and are bound to paint just in that manner and no other; only craftsmen trained to paint in other techniques (called *podstarínshchiki* because they paint *pod starinu* 'in an archaic manner') can copy old icons. For an exact copy of an ancient icon you must go to a *podstarinshchik* or, better, not to an icon-painter at all but to an ordinary artist. Between the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries we find no such adoption of Greek or rather Byzantine colouring as we do in the twelfth and thirteenth; nor do they quite adopt the colouring of the Italo-Cretan icons Russian icon are easily distinguished. The master or pupil makes up his colours himself. First he mixes raw yolk of egg with thin *kvas* (rye beer) or water, and drops a little of this mixture which starts rather yellow, into ten or fifteen gallipots, and in these he dissolves his colours, as he has need. The craftsmen of Mstëra or Palëkh, the icon-painting villages of Vladimir, can distinguish in which of their painting shops an icon was produced. When he puts before a customer samples of his colours a painter now offers twenty-four or more: ochre, *sankir*, light *sankir*, *sankir* with white lead, black, *bágor*, *bágor* with white, sky colour, *prázelen*', white lead with chrome, white lead, *reff*, *golubéts*, green, *dich*', azure.

To define these colours, which have in the West passed into history, would be difficult and it is not worth while, it would be easier to give a coloured plate with a reproduction of them all. None the less, some general account of them may be given. The names of the colours and the general scale answer to the *Pódlinniki* and these go back to originals fixed about the beginning of the sixteenth century. In the *Podlinniki* we have enumerated *bágor* and *bakán*, two dark reds, the latter maroon, the other more purplish; they are called Venetian colours. The Virgin's cloak is of this colour in Italo-Cretan icons: *Venetian golubéts* is both dark and light blue (said to be a copper blue, verditer); *Venetian yellow*, a bright chrome yellow; *Venetian cinnabar*, bright red vermilion; *lavra*, indigo; *azure*, ultramarine or its substitutes, coarse indigo (*kub*) or later Prussian blue; *mummy*, dark red; *umber*; *reft*', dark grey with a blackish tinge; *sankir*, ochre and black (see above); *soot*; *red lead*; *chérvlen*', crimson; *Venetian yar*', verdigris (acetate of copper), light green; *prázelen*', green with a bluish tinge. We can see clearly the dependence of Russian icon-painting upon the Venetian colours, which were exported all over the east.

Very noticeable is the predominance of red in various tones, also important it

is which of the different reds is used and how it is applied. Bright red is the distinguishing feature of the Nóvgorod, Pskov, and in general northern school; this is the colour of Russian folk dress (of the peasant's shirt, in *kumách*, what we call Turkey twill). It is from the north that the Moscow school derived its pink hills and buildings and the custom of brightening an icon with red patches of raiment^[56]. When we remember that the words *miniator*, *miniatura* come from *minium* (a red colour,) we must believe that in this popular passion for red, we see the action of popular as against sophisticated culture. It is well known that the precious cinnabar was brought from Persia and was long the privilege of royalty and its general use only spread with the close of the Middle Ages. Before then had come in various sorts of brownish red, *chérvlen'*, *bágor* and *bakán*, crimson or dark purplish red. By the shades of red one can judge of the age of an icon; significant in early icon-painting is the appearance of dark maroon or dark lilac purple. We no longer find pure dark blue in ancient Russian icons after the fourteenth century at Nóvgorod; both in icons and wall-paintings we only see *lavra* (indigo) and blue with a greenish tinge. In Greek icons, dark blue is used before the end of the fourteenth century; in Russia it only appears in the sixteenth. Both light and dark blue are called azure (*Iázor'*): *vissón* and is the name for a dark lilac shot with blue: *golubéts*, a pale blue colour like modern cobalt, only appears during the sixteenth century, and in backgrounds is a sign of western influence.



48. *Saint John the Baptist*, middle of the 14th century.
Egg tempera on plaster on wood, 87.5 x 66 cm.
The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.



49. Photius Kontoglou, *Saint John the Baptist*, 1963. Private Collection.

A very interesting colour is *prázelen'*,^[57] which includes not only green but various dark blue tones and indigo. It is the chief mark of Nóvgorod painting in the fifteenth century, being used freely in place of light blue in Greek draperies. It is noticeable that the very word is a corruption of the Greek term used by the Byzantines for the green of grass and the juice obtained from leeks, which has a green colour with a soft brown shade. This green colour has no body in it; it is liquid and transparent and combines very well with brown (it corresponds to

terra verde). It is this colour which has most part in the highlights of draperies and in reflexes complementary to brick and chestnut browns.

Very characteristic is the recipe for making *prázelerí* in the *Podlinnik*: ‘steep peas for five days and more, pound them and mix with copper.’ There were six sorts of *prázelen*’ used in Nóvgorod schools, some with yellowish shades, some with bluish. Also, cakes of this colour were sold and these were just the same as *terra verde di Verona*. The delicate aery *prázelen*’ of a pale brownish green, harmonising with chestnut red, makes the chief beauty of the Nóvgorod icons of the sixteenth century. The appearance of this tone, contemporaneously with the colour brought into use by Paolo Veronese, but independent of him, raises the decorative effects of icon-painting.

Side by side with the refinements of Russian schools already discussed (highlights, reflexes and the like), we must mention *ínokop* [58] – or, as the icon-painters pronounce it, *ikonop*’ – meaning originally *damascening*, inlaying, or encrusting, *e.g.* bronze with gold, and secondarily painted imitation of this effect. The original technique of etching bronze and plating it with gold or silver was applied in Constantinople especially to doors and we have examples at S. Sophia, on Athos, in Italy (Amalfi[59]) and in Russia (Nóvgorod, Súzdal’, Moscow, State Russian Museum). The imitation goes back as far as the Vatican manuscript of the *Aeneid*, where we find gold hatching on the folds of drapery to bring out the highlights; the same occurs in Byzantine work and is particularly beloved at Siena by Duccio[60] and his followers and at Venice in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. But in Italian icon-painting, this was executed with a fine brush and gold mixed with gum, whereas in Russia it is still done by the old process of *inokop*’ or *assistko* (from Italian *assisa*, ‘size’); these terms both denote the following process. Along the surface of folds in drapery, the edges of rocks, trees, buildings, and in general any places which require strong highlights and so can be brought out with glints of gold, the artist draws a fine brush dipped in a slow-drying gum, just as if he were painting with gold solution. When he has gone over all the lines he applies gold leaf to the whole icon, or the necessary parts, gently rubs it over and leaves it to dry; later, a downy goose feather is used to rub off the gold leaf from where there was no gum and the gold remains as it were inlaid in long fine lines giving light to parts of the picture.



50. *Anastasis*, 14th century. Byzantine fresco, Kariye Djami (Church of the Holy Saviour in the Country), Istanbul.

When it is a case of gold ground first, they colour it all over with a priming (*pódpusk*) of red wine and then cover it with *poliment* made up of wax, egg, and red lead. This is done after the picture is finished and makes the gold redder, like a sovereign. Pale silvery gold is the mark of the early Russo-Byzantine icons. A curious peculiarity of icon-painting is the lighting of figures and scenes, which tend to be conventional, and faithful to an established scheme. Figures *en face* are lit from in front, not from above exactly, but slanting from one side; this throws enough shadow to bring out the modelling of the face and show up the lines which mark character. A top light is considered the best for pictures, but it is not exactly flattering for faces as it throws a sudden dark shadow in the orbits of the eyes and below the nose and lips, and gives a hard line under the chin; all this, however, adds force to the whole expression and brings out the character in the countenance. The slanting light is similar to what we have indoors; it gives an impression of rest without making the face and expression less characteristic. Further, in any composition the light comes from the (spectator's) left; this is the proper side for any one writing, and conventionally for figures walking in procession, entering or in any motion and figures sitting without action, and such figures are always turned towards the middle of the scene – that is, they look towards the spectator's right and the light comes from their left. So likewise to

accord with the convention, if on the right-hand side of the icon there is a figure turned to the left towards the centre of the composition or towards a central figure its illumination comes from the right, which obeys the same principle suited to a figure seen in three quarters.

The settings behind the figures are likewise illuminated from the left, that is, the sun's light falls upon the hills or buildings that are on the right and makes them rosy, while those on the left remain in a lilac, dark green, or smoky shadow. We may remark as a matter of history that older icons observe this rule more strictly than later ones, particularly those of the seventeenth century when the traditions begin to be forgotten and the colours may be put on without meaning. We can be pretty sure that there was a meaning in the minds of the Greek painters who developed the compositions and that it was lost among their successors. As a matter of fact, if we take it that the movement of the composition was from left to right, and that the light fell upon the mountains on the right, the first idea may have been a picture of mountainous desert under the rays of the setting sun; perhaps the prophet or anchorite is thought of as coming out into his rocky desert just at sunset when a man's conscience naturally reviews the day past[\[61\]](#). Moreover, the actual background of the icons is called by the Russian icon-painters the 'light' (*svêt*). This light is the conventional colouring of the ground with its decorative intention, but it varies according to the meaning attached to the colour. So the fundamental 'light' is undoubtedly of gold and of course its original meaning was the shining brightness which should proceed from figures of Christ, the Virgin, and such like. But afterwards, pale-gold, almost electrum, was seen to be the most decorative background on which figures could stand out. The more delicate the manner of painting became, the lighter and paler became this background, so that it gets a silvery sheen or even becomes silver; finally becoming buff or as the old icon painters called it 'waxen'. This background is characteristic of the Russo-Byzantine icons of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and again for the first half of the sixteenth century, as one may see in the icon galleries of the State Russian Museum. In place of the gold, ground common icons allow of an ochre or light yellow ground. Especially conspicuous is the red ground for the *Deesis* and Festivals, characteristic of the fourteenth century, in Russian, Greek, and Balkan icons alike: this has a purely decorative intention and takes the place of the ancient purple. Much later comes in the sky blue or light turquoise ground, both under Italian influence at the end of the sixteenth century.



51. *Our Lady Orans*, or “*Velikaia Panagia*”,
Kiev School, beginning of the 12th century.
Egg tempera on lime wood. 194 x 120 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



The 12th to 14th Centuries: Súzdal and Novgorod, the Greco-Italian school

The part of Russia which centred round Kiev left us no icons of its most ancient period, the Russo-Byzantine as we may with perfect confidence call it in view of its complete subjection to the Byzantine style. All we have is a series of stockpiles, hidden in the soil of Kiev and its environs; they include all sorts of precious trappings from ancient icons, among them cloisonné enamels of a technique which though somewhat coarsened in local workshops may still astonish us[\[62\]](#).

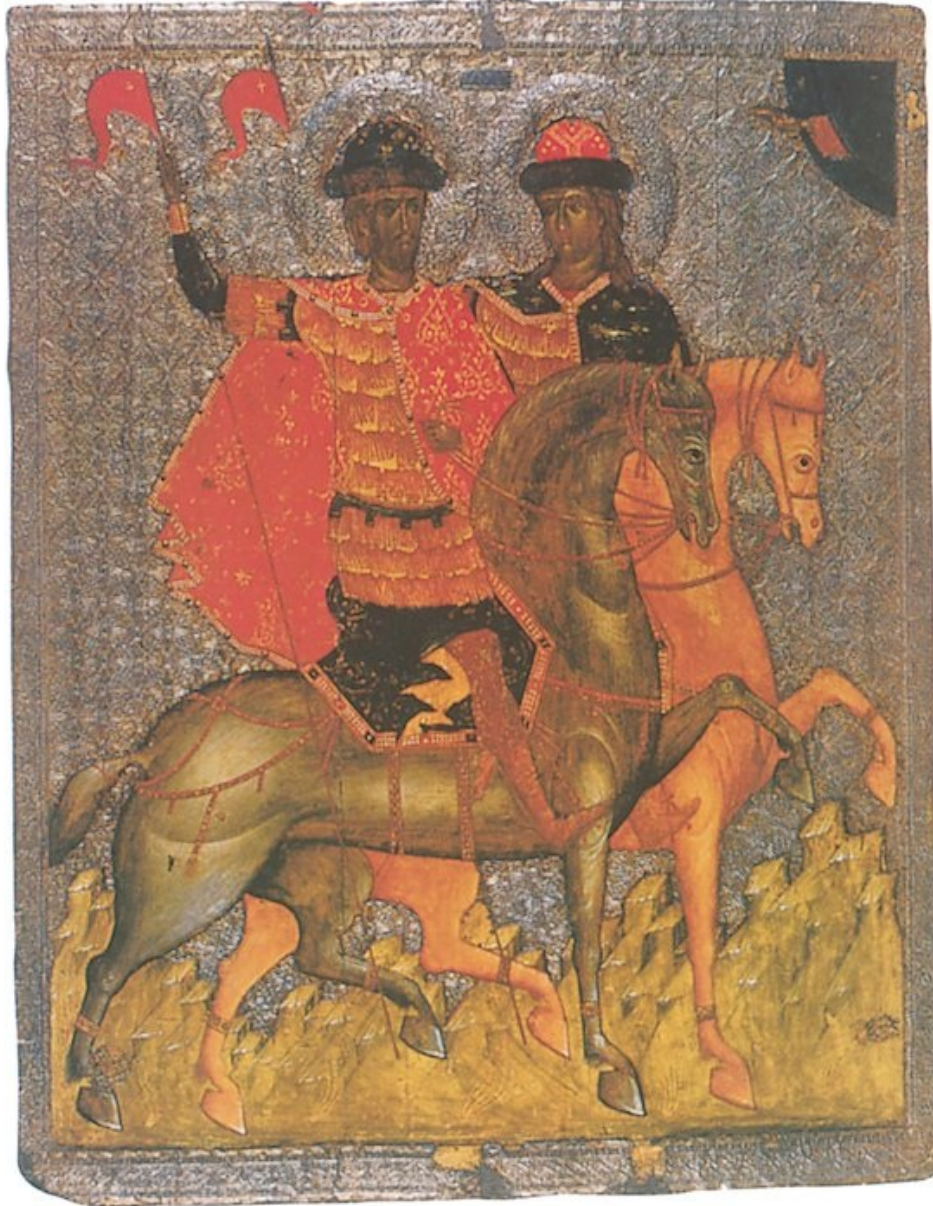
There is just one icon that may be referred to the twelfth century, a *Dormition of the B.V.M.* in the Pechérskaya (Cave) Lávra at Kiev, but being specially venerated it is withdrawn from critical examination; it has certainly been repainted. The other icons which are counted ancient, the so-called *Our Lady of Igor'* in the Lavra and the *Nicholas Thaumaturgus* in S. Sophia, are of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The small number of truly ancient sanctities that survive in the Kiev region is proved by the reverence paid to the Virgin of the Vydubitski monastery below the Lavra, which is nothing more than a little bronze folding cross with a figure of the Virgin, mounted in a large gilt frame.

There are also legends of the first Russian icon-painter Alípi (Alypius) (*d.* A.D. 1114[\[63\]](#)), famous for his fasting, his poverty and his humble toil together with his companion Gregory of the Lavra, but we have no icon to which we can point as an original of his work or, even a copy. The icon of *Our Lady of Vladimir* in the cathedral of Rostóv (Rostov near Yaroslávl') exhibits a composition of the Virgin and the Child which did not come in before the fourteenth century.

Though Kiev offers us no examples of Russo-Byzantine art except mosaics

and frescoes (the latter mostly restored), Nóvgorod and Súzdaľ have icons to show and we may be sure that the investigation of icon-galleries and monasteries will yield a sufficiency of material. The Nóvgorod school at present much the more fully represented so far as numbers go, but for antiquity, going back to Byzantine models, it comes second to that of Súzdaľ. This Súzdaľ school supplied Moscow, and from the sixteenth century, even Nóvgorod and Pskov. As far back as the middle of the twelfth century it had adopted Byzantine models, technique, and draughtsmanship in all their purity and accuracy; to this day it has remained the leader of all branches and schools: no wonder that it produced Andreï Rublëv, Dionysius, Theodosius, and Procopius Chirin.

Compared with this, Nóvgorod, in the far north, lay out of the way and from the time of the Tartar invasion was cut right off from the south. It soon fell to the level of a mere provincial school in every sense of the word, losing guidance before it had succeeded in developing itself and, throughout the fourteenth century, continued the reproduction of bad and clumsy models. If it had some early success in fresco it was due to the invitation given to Greek craftsmen, whose coming at the end of the fourteenth century brought about the high level artistry in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It must, however, be allowed that the Tartar invasion condemned Súzdaľ to two centuries of stagnation and its revival was due to the rise of Moscow. Nevertheless we shall find it easy to show that only the Súzdaľ school retained a fine feeling for drawing icons and a mastery of colour.



52. *Saint Boris and Saint Gleb*, 12th century.
History and Architecture Museum, Novgorod, Russia.

The Súzdal' school was also ultimately based upon the wall-paintings of the many churches built in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and the erection of their iconostases. Much was due to the princes of the Súzdal' region, who were richer and better educated than the churchwardens of Nóvgorod and, as the Chronicle puts it, 'brought together craftsmen from all lands'. We can count a dozen great churches built and decorated in this region between 1150 and 1233: however, with the invasion of 1237, this luxuriant activity was frozen and died.

Churches and monasteries, palaces and towns were plundered and burnt and the craftsmen fled to the far north or to the nearer west; Volhynia and Galicia. These provinces were in close cultural connexion with Kiev, central Russia, and the middle Volga as far as Great Bolgary. The Hypatian Chronicle under the year 1259 tells how Daniel, Prince of Galicia, summoned to work on the churches of Volhynia ‘craftsmen from the Germans and the Tartars’ and brought icons from Kiev and Óvruch. Prince Vladimir (*d.* 1287) furnished the icons of his newly built churches at Kaménets Podól’sk, Vladimir Volýnski, Przemyśl, Lutsk, and Brest with haloes and *tsáty* in gold and precious enamel ‘a wonderful sight to see’.[64] Among them were icons of Ss. Boris and Gleb, such as we can still see on the binding of Mstislav’s Gospels in the Archangel Cathedral at Moscow[65] and in other Russian cloisonnés. We can see with our own eyes the most remarkable among the ancient Súzdal’ icons, that of Our Lady of Bogolyúbov, still preserved in the monastery there near Vladimir; we shall be able to tell how much of the twelfth century original it preserves. The composition follows the pious eastern custom; instead of the donor putting his own portrait up in a church (as was done in the west and also in S. Sophia at Kiev) he preferred to set up, in the central space of the church or among the fixed icons in the iconostas, the figure of the Virgin turned to her left, interceding for men before Christ. The icon has recently been cleaned[66], but even previously we could distinguish the severe Byzantine painting of the face in dark ochre, the typical treatment of the eyes, nose, and lips. Its measurements are against its coming from Byzantium; most likely it was painted on the spot. The Virgin’s head recalls the *Hodegetria* in S. Maria Maggiore at Rome: her mantle is of a chocolate colour, which comes from the Grecian East; but most important for us is the remarkably severe though rather dry manner of drawing which recalls the work of Greece proper[67].

On a level with this venerated icon we must now set the precious icon of Ss. *Boris and Gleb* (the State Russian Museum), laid open to investigation by skilful cleaning[68]. It seems that we may see in this one of the best specimens of the local work of Súzdal’, being a copy of the icon that Antony, Bishop of Novgorod, who journeyed to Constantinople about 1200[69], saw upon the walls of S. Sophia. Close to the high altar, on the right near the place where the emperors were crowned on their accession and where, according to tradition, the Virgin had herself prayed to her Son on behalf of the human race, was set a ‘great’ icon of Ss. Boris and Gleb, ‘and there they have painters’. Thus, we learn that a large icon of the sainted Russian princes was set up for veneration close by the icon-painters’ booth, established to paint and sell on the spot what was required by pilgrims and other clients, just such an arrangement as we still find

in Italian picture galleries. But of course the original of this icon was Russian and we know of the setting up of icons of the two saints in the church where their relics were laid and of the building of several churches dedicated to them as early as the twelfth century. Still, our icon is so thoroughly marked by the full severity of the Byzantine manner that we must believe either that its maker was instructed in this school, or that even a Russian icon could be consummately recast in Constantinople and that from this model is derived the icon in the State Russian Museum.



53. *Saint Boris and Saint Gleb and Scenes from their Lives*, c. 1350. Tempera on panel 134 x 89 cm.
From the church of Ss. Boris and Gleb in Kolomna.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



54. *The Annunciation*, first half of the 14th century.
Egg tempera on plaster on wood, 55 x 43 cm.
The Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow.



55. *The Annunciation of Ustyug*, Novgorod School,
end of the 12th century to the beginning of the 13th century.
From Saint George's Monastery at Novgorod.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



56. *The Transfiguration*, 12th century.
Egg tempera on plaster on wood, 23.2 x 23.7 cm.
The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

The most interesting thing about the icon is that it is clearly a real portrait of the Russian princes: their individuality strikes one immediately. The faces are of a Georgian or eastern Greek type, and according to some chronicles Boris and Gleb were sons of Vladimir by Anna, the daughter of Romanus II who traced his descent from the Armenian Arsacidae, or else by a Bulgarian wife. Boris has long thick hair, Gleb's falls behind in rather feminine locks; this detail recurs in

other icons and in the miniatures of Silvester's Miscellany (*Sbórník*) of the fourteenth century[70]. The slenderness of the waists is purposely exaggerated; it was a fashion throughout Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, no doubt brought in by the Orientals in the ninth and tenth centuries and kept up by the familiarity with the east due to the Crusades.

The princes wear the usual caps, edged with sable and made of green and red silk counter changed and embroidered with stars and edged with rows of pearls along the seams. Such caps, clearly of Oriental origin, were in use in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, not only in Russia, but in the Slavonic countries of central Europe; we find them, for instance, on the frescoes of S. Boleslav in Bohemia. Both princes wear tight eastern kaftáns; Gleb's is of a dark mauve (*bakán*) adorned with golden figures of griffins and eagles alternating with lilies and palmettes; Boris's is red (vermilion) and covered solely with palmettes. Above their kaftans they wear cloaks properly called *kórzno*, the general term for the warm upper garments of the northern nations, lined with fine white fur, ermine or squirrel. Their high boots are of red 'Russia' leather adorned with golden fleurs-de-lis and strings of pearls such as were assigned to the rank of 'Despot' at the Byzantine court. The hilts and sheaths of their swords are of the ceremonial pattern: in their hands they bear the cross of martyrdom. Special importance attaches to the eagles and griffins on Gleb's kaftan. They may be closely paralleled by the clothes of the Emperor in the frescoes of S. Cyril at Kiev[71] and of the Grand Prince Yaroslav in S. Saviour's (*Spas*) on the Nereditsa at Nóvgorod (1198)[72]. The pose, both of the griffin courant with open jaws and the eagle or other big bird preening his feathers with his beak, is taken from models displayed on the Súzdal' buildings, though ultimately we can follow it right back to the antiquities of Scythia and Siberia. This is the source of the characteristic fold in the beast's upper lip[73]. At the same time we may point out that the figures of griffins and birds, executed in *ínokop'* right across the folds, as if they were woven into or embroidered upon the material, have a specially Oriental character, for while the Byzantines generally put their animals into definite roundels, this stuff all embroidered with beasts, birds, and plants, conventionalized though they be, gives us the picturesque effect of a carpet adorned after the Eastern fashion with a garden (*paradise*) or hunting scene[74].

Not less important for this examination, is the actual method of painting, which is as different from the early Nóvgorod manner as picture-painting is from icon-painting. Here we have, in the faces and hands, real modelling of the muscles and tones of the body: the highlights are put in softly, the red of the cheeks is blended right into the *sankir*, the first coat of flesh colour, and gives its colour to the dark sunburnt faces and swarthy skin. Compared with this, the

Nóvgorod icon of *S. Thomas*, likewise painted after the Byzantine manner, gives us lifeless flesh tints, a mere scheme for the face, coarse highlights on the muscles and folds. How perfect and refined, compared to the Nóvgorod icon, are the colouring and pigments in the icon of Ss. Boris and Gleb; in one we find a delicious dark blue for Boris's cloak, a subtle shade of dark chestnut shot with violet for Gleb's kaftan. In the other, we have a primitive bluish-green indigo, and nothing beside the fine gold sprays of vine pattern which are arranged to cover the dark blue ground of Boris's cloak.



57. *Our Lady Hodegetria*, end of the 13th century.
Egg tempera on wood, 122 x 86 cm.
Regional Museum of Rivne, Ukraine.



58. *Our Lady of Pimen*, second half of the 14th century.
Egg tempera on plaster on canvas on wood,
67 x 48 cm. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

But Russian icon-painting did not long remain at this level. We see this in the icon of *S. Demetrius of Thessalonica* which hangs alongside the former in the State Russian Museum. It is, likewise, painted upon a pale gold ground; below is a strip of herbage. The saint wears a red cloak, from the earliest times the mark of noble warriors among the saints such as S. George, but the most distinguishing detail is the saint's equipment, a mail corslet worn over a leathern

jerkin or gambeson, the lower margin of which is cut into strips. Above the mail is a belt supporting a bowcase and quiver. According to the Greek legends the saint was the protector of Thessalonica against the Slavs and so he is unsheathing his sword. The dark flesh colour and harsh highlights are remarkable-it is possible the icon is a Nóvgorod copy of a Súzdal' icon of the fourteenth century. An undoubted example of a thirteenth-century Súzdal' icon is that of *S. John Chrysostom* in the Ostroúkhov collection. This icon came from the cathedral iconostas out of the *Deesis* tier, also called *the tier of the Fathers of the Church*. It is distinguished by the narrowness of the panel on which it is painted; the figure is stiff and the drawing marred by an exaggerated attempt to make it a close portrait of the great patriarch[\[75\]](#).

Russo-Byzantine icons from Nóvgorod are rare both in churches and in collections and only one or two specimens are ascribed to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Among them we should first consider the miraculous icon of *Our Lady of the Sign (Zndmenie)*, the Palladium of Nóvgorod. Tradition connects this icon with the protection afforded by the Virgin herself when the city was attacked by the men of Súzdal' in 1169[\[76\]](#). Of course, the tradition was invented by the Russian clerks and is an adaptation of the defence of Byzance against the Persians by the exhibition of the Virgin's vesture upon the wall (A.D. 625).

In 1355 a cathedral (*sobór*) was built and to it was brought the icon of *Our Lady of the Sign*, and the church has since borne the name Známenski. The icon called by this name shows Mary standing with her hands raised (*orans*) while the Child is represented conventionally in a circular medallion or shield over her breast.

There can be no doubt that to the twelfth century belongs the remarkable icon of *Ss. Peter and Paul* which is the principal icon of the cathedral of S. Sophia at Nóvgorod[\[77\]](#); but only the heads, hands, and feet are painted, the vestments in low relief and the background are in repoussé work, and the frame bears little figures of Apostles and Prophets in high relief. The icon has great importance in the history of Byzantine iconography because it represents the chief of the Apostles in conversation. This particular subject almost went out faded from use after early Christian times and did not return to popularity until the twelfth century, both in Byzance and Sicily, where the life of the two Apostles was represented in mosaic (e.g. in the Capella Palatina at Palermo). We must suppose that icons of the type appeared in Byzance in the twelfth century, but it is not till the fifteenth that it spread widely in Greek and Russian art.

If we mention the full-length icon of *S. George* in S. George's Monastery (*Yur'evski*) and the large *Annunciation* in S. Anthony's Monastery, both of the

twelfth century to judge by their style, we have come to an end of the list of Russo-Byzantine icons in the Nóvgorod churches. There are a few such of the thirteenth century. Most instructive historically is an icon of S. *George* that has been cleaned[\[78\]](#). Its antiquity is proved by the style of painting and inscriptions and it is of first-rate importance for comparison with icons of S. George dating from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. In this icon we have not a portrait of the great martyr, but a representation of his achievement, the slaying of the dragon. The tale of this wondrous feat took shape as early as the seventh century, but the earliest representations of it belong to the eleventh. In Byzance they knew the picture of S. George on horseback and his combat with the dragon, but the subject gained wide popularity after the Crusades. Our icon is all painted by one artist, but he had more than one model.



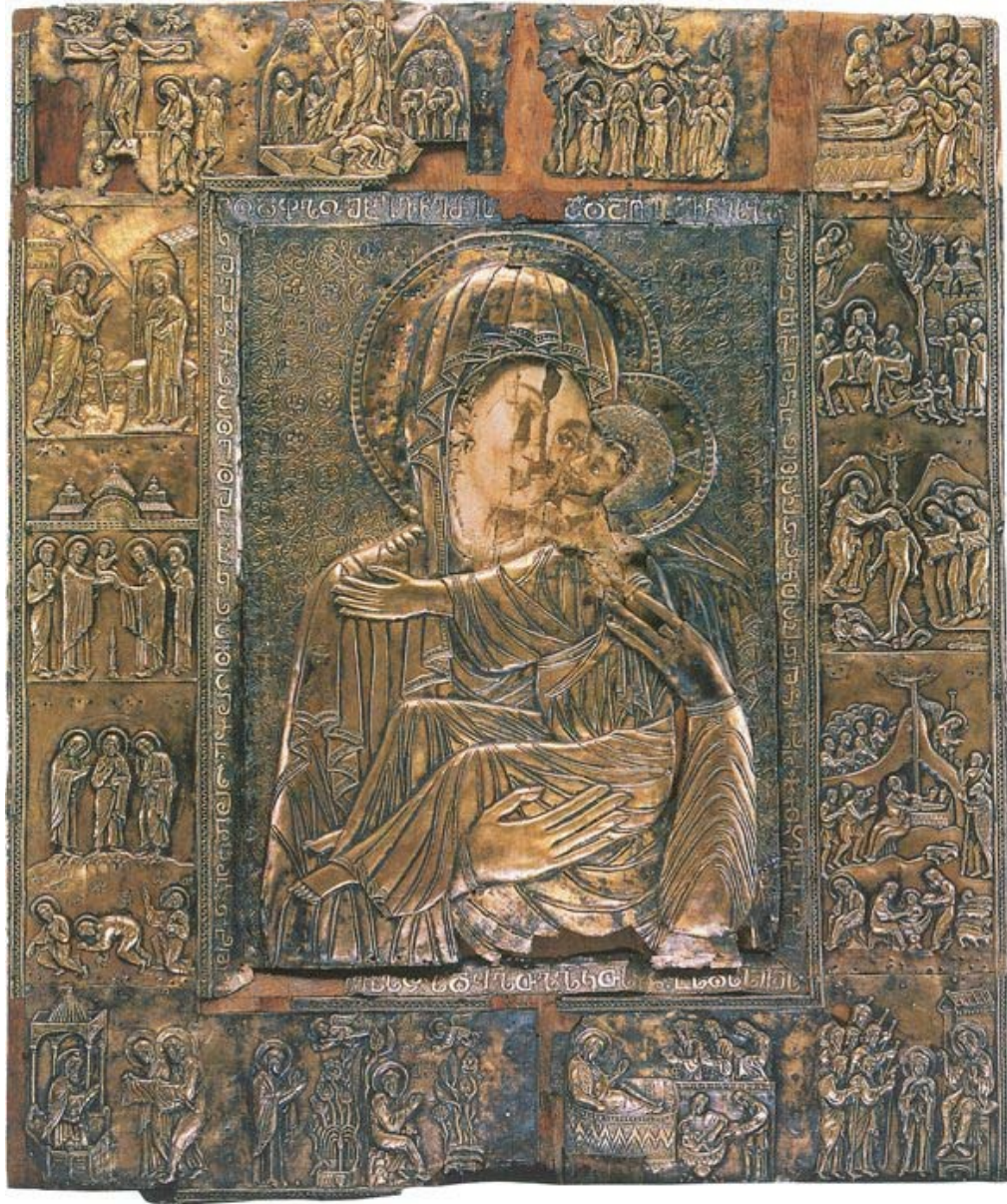
59. *The Archangel Gabriel* (the Golden-Haired Angel), 12th century.
48 x 239 cm. The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.



60. *The Virgin with Child*, 14th century.
National Museum of Ohrid, Macedonia.



61. *The Virgin Mary*, Cretan School,
end of the 15th century. Private Collection.



62. *Our Lady Eleusa* (Our Lady of Tenderness)
 enframed by the Church Feast Days, 12th to 13th century.
 Silver, wood, embossing, chasing and gilding,
 76.5 x 65.2 cm. Art Museum of Georgia, Tbilisi, Georgia.

The scenes copied from miniatures of a manuscript are, like their originals, painted upon a white ground; they are in the early Greco-Slavonic manner and have not lost sight of the Greek original, but they are necessarily on a much larger scale. In one scene we find a curious detail which belongs definitely to Nóvgorod: S. George distributes his goods to the poor in the shape of silver rods

about four inches long, such as were the old Nóvgorod rubles.

The civilising movement, which embraced the whole European world in the fourteenth century, appeared in Russia in the form of the building many monasteries all over the north of the country and particularly in Nóvgorod. In the history of painting, this century confronts us with a singular variety of manners; this variety is greatest where stray models from outside offered themselves for reproduction and imitation. This was particularly the case at Nóvgorod, where at this time no single fixed manner of drawing or colouring dominated, so much so that it is possible to enumerate no less than ten styles, if we base ourselves on the examples that have come down to us. In this respect Nóvgorod is in strong contrast to the uniformity of Súzdal'. The most curious point is that the different styles answer to the iconographic character of the subjects; in each case some imported model determined the style. We can see this by taking a certain number of Nóvgorod icons in the State Russian Museum and comparing them, where possible, with the types of icons honoured in the Nóvgorod churches.

Such an icon is that of *Nicholas Thaumaturgus* in his *sobor* on Yaroslav's Court, the open space in the middle of the Trade Side where the assembly met^[79]. The icon, being painted upon a round panel, was probably a banner. It may be assigned to the thirteenth or early fourteenth century. Copies of it are in various churches and in the State Russian Museum; all have the dark flesh colour, and, unlike the Byzantine manner, have a leaning towards ordinary painting in their colouring and in the light planes being put in with broad patches of dark red. The face still preserves some Greek features, but the expression is comparatively kind, not rigidly ascetic, and the lines have something of the Russian about them.

In quite another, rather primitive, popular style is a pair of very early *Royal Doors*. In these, the Greek design has been reduced to the barest possible scheme; the dominant colours are red and green, and these in pale diluted tones: this, in a sense, takes the scenes out of reality into a world of fancy. However, the reason was not that the craftsmen sought to express some significant symbolism, such as is invented for them in the interpretations of modern aesthetes, but was because they were not capable of anything else.

Examples of such manners often stand isolated or only by chance contributed to the stream of Russian icon-painting, however, its general course at Nóvgorod is becoming clear to us and is governed by the selection of certain iconographic types with which the manner of painting was correlated. The most evident case of such a type is that of *The Virgin*. A new representation of the Virgin became, in the fourteenth century, the preoccupation of the whole Christian world, west and east alike. In Italy, there was a definite departure from the Byzantine type

and in this they were followed by the whole Balkan peninsula and Mount Athos. An early example of the new tendency is a remarkable icon of *The Virgin* in the collection of S. P. Ryabushinski at Moscow, assigned to the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century[\[80\]](#). The new features are the dark brown ground, the light flesh colour, and more especially the youthful face; in everything else, in the vestures of the Mother and Child and in the composition, it reproduces the *Hodegetria* or, as the Russians call the type, *Our Lady of Smolensk*, and bears the marks of the Italo-Cretan style. Around the frame is a prayer translated closely from Late Greek prayers, a clear indication of its Greek model. The treatment of the faces shows an unaccustomed hand carefully exaggerating the Byzantine lines round the eyes and the features of the Child.



63. *Our Lady of Tenderness with Child enframed by Saints*,
15th century. Egg tempera on plaster on wood, 33.1 x 26.8 cm.
The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.



64. Andreas Pavias, *Our Lady Hodegetria*,
end of the 15th century. Teutonic Cemetery, Vatican.

The second half of the fourteenth century is, for art and civilization throughout Europe, a time of general progress due to the new energetic life of the city communes. The place of the empire's solitary initiative is taken by the free and varied life of the towns with their friendly co-operation, their communities and guilds. Artistic life in its various forms expresses the beginnings of political life in different countries and links them all together, and the veneration of the picture of the Virgin at the end of the fourteenth century became for all Europe the

expression of a new spiritual movement in Christianity[81]. If we look for it, we find the same type, not only in the familiar parts of Italy, but in the Greek icon-painting of its eastern coast, or on the Balkan peninsula. But when we think how little has been done to bring into one intelligible whole the history of painting in northern and central Italy, Venice and Florence, Pisa and Siena, is it any wonder that there is some difficulty in following up the connexions of Russian icon-painting through the Greek intermediary with that of Italy?

This is how, quite provisionally, and of its own accord there has arisen the idea of an historical group, an Italo-Cretan school of icon-painting working from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. There are good reasons for calling the school in its earlier period Greco-Italian and in the latter Cretan, though Panselinos the great master of the sixteenth century was not from Crete[82]. This is followed by a third period which is better classed apart from the Italo-Cretan school as late Greek, as it has almost completely lost the style, manner of drawing, and painting of the Cretan school, and approaches that of the Russian *fryaz'* (or semi-European style).

The Italo-Cretan school had its own style, quite different from the purely Byzantine both in drawing and colouring, and, strange to say, this style is much the same in Venice and in Sicily, and is most clearly defined in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The icon-painting of Venice is best known to us by the work of one of its early masters, Maestro Paolo Testi[83], who had freed himself from the Byzantine drawing with its stiff and harsh folds, but still kept to the Greek colouring instead of going over to the 'Gothic' or rather Giottesque manner. It is true that he did paint a *Coronation of the Virgin*, now at Sigmaringen, a composition not in the least Greek, and took over from the Italian painters the elongated proportions which were natural in Gothic sculpture and passed from it into painting. But the same Paolo painted after the Greek fashion a great icon-panel which once covered the front of the altar of S. Mark's in Venice. Since 1847 it has been fixed as a back to the famous frontal of gold and enamel, the *Pala d'Oro*[84]. Paolo's work is dated by an inscription "1345"; it is comprised of seven half-length icons and seven incidents in S. Mark's life. It is all in the newer, 'softened' Greek manner, more like ordinary painting, but it is nothing like so near to it as several other classes of icons, though again it does include the purely Western subject of the *Ecce Homo*. Venice itself possesses a kind of museum of its icon-painting in the collection preserved in the church of S. Giorgio dei Greci.

In general, Italo-Cretan icons differ from the purely Byzantine by a special softness of touch especially about the folds of the drapery, due to their being nearer to ordinary painting. The conventional compositions and types remain the

same as before, but the hard scheme of the drawing is softened by the gentle gradations of a manner which takes the sharpness out of the highlights. The style loves dark red or dark brown draperies and shades their folds with subtle modelling and an avoidance of anything like hard highlights. Besides this the deep and rich colouring agrees more with the Oriental styles than with those of Greece proper.



65. *The Synaxis of the Apostles*, beginning of the 14th century. Egg tempera on plaster on wood, 38 x 34 cm.
The Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow.



66. *The Last Judgement*,
 Novgorod School, middle of the 15th century.
 Egg tempera on pine panel, 162 x 115 cm.
 The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

Along side this new colouring in icon-painting there appears a new expressiveness upon the countenances of the sacred persons, evidently under the influence of Italian picture-painting and in answer to an idealistic religious movement, by which a worshipper came to require a spiritual communion with the picture to assist their devotions. To the Italo-Cretan school is due the development of the types of *Our Lady's Tenderness* which were adopted by

Russian art[85]. The idea of the new composition in Greek icons to express on the Mother's face her sorrowful presage of her Divine Son's passion. Seeing His Mother's grief, hidden though it is, the Son presses Himself close to her with childish caresses, and she answers this by yielding to the tenderness of a mother's love. To this series belong the famous Russian miraculous icons of *Our Lady of Vladimir*, of *Poemen*, and of *the Passion*, all three in Moscow cathedrals.

The colouring of Italo-Cretan icons is another reason for grouping them together. This colour scheme is quite different from that of pure Greek icons, being marked by deep rich thick tones, dark lilac, dark chocolate, and dark blue or greenish brown on a ground of correspondingly deep reddish gold. For example, *Our Lady of Tikhvin* shows all this and is a direct copy of a Venetian icon.

The purely Greek icon went on, right into the fourteenth century resembling a drawing coloured in light tones, but it is not from this that the Italo-Cretan school derives; its Greek original is the Greco-Oriental which always existed side by side with the purely Greek or Byzantine. The best example of the Venetian style is the *Trinity* (R.M., No. 1806) quite close in colouring to the work of Giovanni Bellini and a clear proof of the intimate interdependence of icons and pictures in Venice[86].

Another element of the Italo-Cretan school is its fondness for ornament; for instance, the gold grounds of glories and crowns are decorated with *pointillé* work and the freely painted folds of drapery are hatched with gold or set off by gold highlights. The Byzantines did this by applying gold leaf, and the Russian craftsmen kept long to this method, but the Italo-Cretans used a gold solution, that is, a mixture of artificial gold powder with thin gum, as this allowed of making curved strokes upon the folds. The Russians took to this process and developed it in the sixteenth century. Finally icon-painters, under the influence of the fourteenth-century Venetians such as Lorenzo Veneziano, took to expressing the relief of the body and face, even of large icons, by close-set hatching with fine strokes of tempera which takes the place of rounded modelling of the muscles. Of course, this picking out of the draperies with gilding or heightening with gold paint was applied by both the Italian and the Russian icon-painters to the great central figures of iconography, to the Virgin and Christ whose dark green, dark blue or dark red cloaks were covered with a gold network. But there was no mystic meaning in this, no symbolism, and when people see in it a special 'theory in colours' we must regard it as metaphysical speculation[87]. A specially interesting example of the eastern Greek colouring, or as the old Russian painters called it, 'of dark ochre', is a *Virgin and Child* in the State Russian Museum[88]. In it, we have a manner comparable to that of

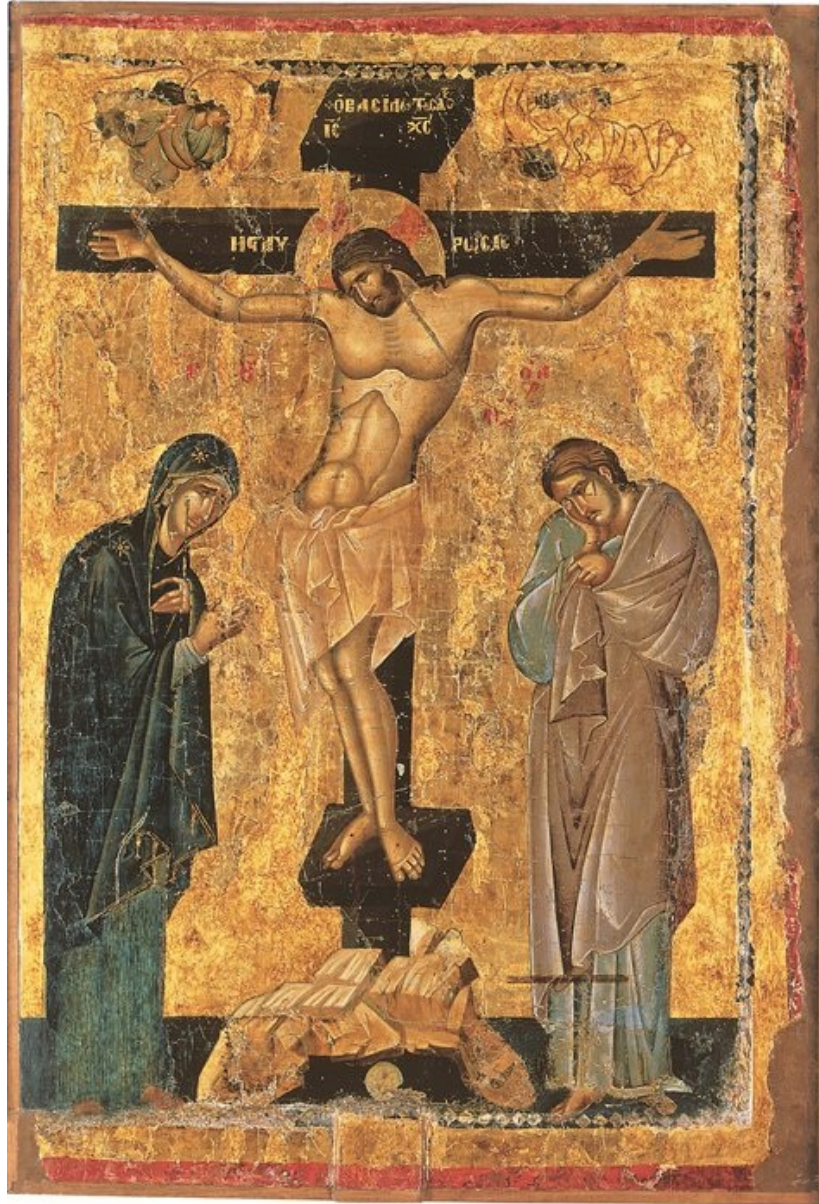
Rembrandt or Franz Hals. Most remarkable is the way in which the fundamental dark under-coats of the flesh are lit up with smoky *sankir* and the draperies with dark green, ochre, and vermillion. The brightly lit, softly white and rosy countenance of the young Mother is a really wonderful piece of painting; a bright patch of colour is afforded by the figure of the Child with his light blue 'spotted shirt', yellow gold-streaked himation, and red sash.

In this style the characteristic ascetic eastern Greek types of Evangelists and Fathers are rendered with an exaggerated meagreness of body, which marks Georgian and Armenian icons. The whole style differs entirely from the pure Byzantine manner.

A final peculiarity of the Italo-Cretan schools is in the complementary reflexes or highlights and reflected lights in draperies. This means that reddish tones have green reflexes answering to them, and brown tones have light blue, while green draperies have brown shadows. This fashion goes on into the fifteenth century in Nóvgorod icons, and becomes, for such a period and to such an extent, their characteristic mark. This was so much the case that when the Novgorod studios were transferred to Moscow it became there the special sign of the 'first Moscow manner' of our *starínshchiki*[\[89\]](#).



67. *The Crucifixion*, 14th century.
Byzantine Museum, Athens.



68. *The Crucifixion* (Reverse side of double-side icon).
Church of the Virgin Peribleptos of Ohrid
(today Church of Saint Clement), Macedonia.

With the Italo-Cretan icons we must class those which have always been called *Korsúnskiya*. According to the legend Vladimir was christened here and took hence the priests, icons, and the sacred gear for the Christianizing of Kiev[90]. But when icons are called Korsunian it does not, as most people think, imply this antiquity going back to Vladimir and the old Kiev period; the word is applied to all sorts of objects (for instance, the Korsun' cross of rock crystal in the Uspenski Sobor at Moscow, fourteenth century) due to foreign, mostly

Genoese, trade in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and imported both from the east and the west through Caffa, Kerch, and Cherson.

To distinguish icons with the Korsun' stamp at Nóvgorod is easy if we compare them with the old Nóvgorod or the Byzantine icons. In the Korsun' class we miss the strict system of highlights; everything is more like ordinary painting and softened, the drawing is simpler and ruder, there occur patches of colour without any highlights upon them and these aim at quite a special effect, and altogether the colouring is different, more allied to what is called 'the dark ochre style'. Significant is the very faint way in which the nostrils are indicated, not merely in icons with small figures but even in large ones with half-lengths; it is so faint that they can scarcely be distinguished; this is a kind of special impressionism and an easily recognisable mark.

The early development of civilisation in the Nóvgorod region and the prosperity of Nóvgorod itself was due to its being a meeting-place of the roads along which the world trade from the east and Byzantium passed to the north and west, it was a distribution centre and storage place for goods. The comparative abundance of early icons preserved in Nóvgorod, its environs and in Pskov, mostly in monasteries but some in churches, witnesses to the general wealth and comfort of the whole population. But this abundance requires, for its full explanation, the historical catastrophe that fell upon the city and the whole region, bringing impoverishment and loss of population, so that old things had to be preserved because there was no means of putting new in their place. At Nóvgorod masonry churches were being built and adorned with wall-paintings and iconostases in a series unbroken from the year 1108 to 1445.

Meanwhile, side by side with the masonry churches, went the construction of a great number of wooden churches, sometimes with many domes or spires^[91]. Many too, were the churches burnt to the ground, often with all the icons that adorned them. Naturally the wooden churches did not lend themselves to wall-paintings and they were decorated with icons to supply which local workshops arose. But when a masonry church was built, companies of 'Greek' artists (this included any one from the Balkan peninsula, Bulgars and Serbs as well as Greeks) were invited to cover the walls. They would also execute iconostases, the painting of which was much more like fresco with its bright colours. That is why, in Nóvgorod icons, we see two strains alternately or side by side, the true icon-painting with rich dark ochre coat (*okhrenie*) and the icons painted in quite light tints almost like water-colour.

We can see the same thing in the drawing: the earliest, and likewise the best, icons are drawn in a broad, in its way monumental, style; in the later ones, and the shopwork (*kustárnyya*,) we find the drawing simplified, the folds of the

draperies reduced almost to the vertical lines and the human figure and its clothing to a mere convention.



69. *The Descent from the Cross*, last quarter of the 15th century.
Egg tempera on lime tree panel, 91 x 62 cm.
Icon and Painting Museum, Moscow.



70. *Saint Demetrius of Thessalonica*,
Novgorod School, 15th century.
Icon Museum, Recklinghausen, Germany.

We may take as an example the icon of *S. Thomas* in the State Russian Museum. It is still in a style that has not lost touch with Byzantine originals with their refined oval faces (Attic, as we call them, that is, in accordance with the classical convention), thin noses, small lips, and the scheme of Greek *himation* and *chiton* which make up the so-called ‘apostolic vesture’; still surviving and familiar to the Grecian east as worn by Syrians, Bedouins, and the like. On this

Russian icon, the brows are arched in accordance with the Russian type, the eyeballs are not at all convex and the drapery is done after the model of the frescoes, not after the icon fashion; nor yet does it show true understanding of drapery, the forms are confused.

Again from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries icons became more and more dependent upon the miniatures in manuscripts which the icon-painters had to follow as a result of a lack of icons as models. At this time a particular, excessively simplified scheme which the *starínshchiki* regard as primitive and coming before any true style (*dostil'ny*) arose. The fact is, there are many such icons in the Nóvgorod style and they may belong to various dates from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, but since they are 'monastery' work made for the villages of the distant north or mere cheap shopwork they really have no style at all, though they may betray their late date by the adoption of late schemes of composition.

We have seen an example of such simplification in Ryabushin's *Hodegetria* or *Smolenskaya*[\[92\]](#). An other type is represented in the history of Russian icon-painting by the well known, miraculous Virgin honoured at Konevéts (called among icon-painters *Our Lady of the Dove*, *Golubitskaya*), an island monastery in Lake Ládoga. This icon is still held in high honour and copies of it are multiplied. In older times it was particularly common in Nóvgorod painting, and the best example of it, though not early (beginning of the sixteenth century), is in the Ostroúkhov Collection. It shows us the Virgin with the Child on her left arm playing with a white bird (much too small for a dove) on His left hand; his right hand holds a string to keep the bird from escaping. This motif, of the Child playing with a bird, is so well known in Italian painting of the fourteenth century that I use it as a capital instance of the transmission of iconic types and artistic influence from Italy to Greece (first by way of the Italo-Cretan school) and thence to Russia[\[93\]](#). The fact is that this particular theme arose and first established itself in the art of northern France (such a statue is at Winchester College) and from there spread to Italy. It presents the Child playing, as was the custom in those days, with a goldfinch flying on a string. Another element is a medieval superstition that the goldfinch is endowed with a peculiar sensitiveness to disease. It was held that if a goldfinch is brought to the bedside of a sick child, it feels whether he will recover and looks towards him or away from him accordingly; it was even believed that the goldfinch had a miraculous power of sucking the peccant humours out of a sick child[\[94\]](#). It is not only in the subject that we can see the connexion; the drawing of the child's figure also takes us back to Italian originals of the second half of the fourteenth century (e.g. Spinello Aretino in the

Accademia at Florence, 1391) and so through Italy to the prototypes in French sculpture: we see the Child pulling at the string with His right hand so as to draw back the bird which is trying to fly off His left. The dates confirm this, as the Konevéts icon was brought there in 1393. But there are still many details outside what is found in ordinary Greek icons of the Virgin, and due to a different school; these still require explanation.

Purely Russian icons of this theme show a white goldfinch or some sort of white bird instead of a finch, and there follows the interpretation that it is a white dove, and a halo round it marks it as the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove; so the icon is called *Golubitskaya* (from *Gólu'*, dove). It is a case of a small fraud, but a pious one and an explanation made to suit it: yet there is something strange in the emblem of the Holy Ghost being led upon a string, even if by the hands of the God-child^[95].



71. *The Battle Between the Novgorodians and the Suzdalians or The Virgin of the Sign*,
 Novgorod School, second half of the 15th century.
 The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



The 14th and 15th Centuries: the Súzdal School and Andreï Rublëv

The best way to gain a scientific view of the development of icon-painting in Russia is to keep a firm hold on the connexion between the different schools, and to throw light upon them by studying the chief iconographic types. Before we return to Súzdal' and its painting in the middle of the fourteenth century, it does well to recall the specially favourable position in which it was placed and the progress it had made up to that date.

The Suzdal' region lies in the central belt of a plane which stretches across Europe from the middle Volga through Volhynia and Galicia to Czech-Republic and Slovakia. This all has a Slavonic population and in early medieval times was bound together by political and cultural connexions. While the Mongol invasion laid south Russia waste for centuries and so cut off central Russia from Byzance and the Balkan Peninsula, it did not hinder communications with the western Slavs, and these became closer and from them models were obtained not only through Galicia but through the Bukovina. Peter (*d.* 1323; afterwards canonized), who moved the metropolitanical see from Vladimir to Moscow, hailed from Galicia where he had been a 'wondrous icon-painter' and had founded his own monastery. Legend connects him with an icon (*Petróvskaya Bogomáter'*) [\[96\]](#) still revered in the Uspenski Cathedral at Moscow, which he had a hand in founding. The Metropolitan Photius (1408-31) brought Galicia under the ecclesiastical authority of Moscow. Thus began a general recovery in Russia. During the century between 1340 and 1440, there went forth a hundred and fifty founders of monasteries; these foundations were the expression of a great economic revival.

To this same hundred years goes back the special veneration paid to certain

icons of the Virgin, forming quite a series: *Our Lady of Vilna*, 1341; *of Halich*, 1350; *of the Don*, 1380; *of Poemen* (an Italian original), 1381; and so on. The second half of the fourteenth century was adorned in Russia by three holy men of great ability, Ss. Alexis of Moscow, Sergius of Rádonezh, and Stephen of Perm. All three were educated men, well acquainted with the Scriptures, and even instructed in Greek books; they helped to their best ability the art of icon-painting, establishing it in the monasteries they founded so that their assistants had to occupy themselves with it.[\[97\]](#)

The most famous of Russian icon-painters, Andreï Rublëv, was a monk of the Spaso-Andrónikov monastery in Moscow. Before that, he had apparently been a lay brother in the Trinity Lavra and a pupil of the icon-painter there. Afterwards he painted the walls of the cathedrals of the Annunciation at Moscow, of the Dormition at Vladimir, and of the Trinity in the Lavra. He died in Moscow between 1427 and 1430, at a very great age. Some icon-painters are still convinced that Rublëv was the saint of Radonezh himself, pointing out that certain icons from the hand of Rublëv are miraculous. There is significance in this; the reputation of being miraculous does indeed attach to icons venerable for their antiquity or artistic merit. And in Rublëv there was something more than artistic skill, there was in him the personal experience and expression of a new religious emotion (*umilénie*) concentrated upon icons of *Our Lady with the Child*. This led to a great number of copies and their spreading all the way to Nóvgorod and Pskov. This has led to great confusion in attempts to define what Rublëv's style really was[\[98\]](#).



72. *The Annunciation*, end of the 14th century.
Egg tempera on pine panel, 43 x 34 cm.
Zagorsk Museum of Art and History, Russia.



73. Andreï Rublëv, *The Annunciation*, 1408.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

Rublëv was an artist and a creator, in the full sense of the words: he did not merely hand on the severe design of the Byzantines but added to it his own very characteristic touch, and, most of all, created new religious types with a new expression, which results in informing religious art with a new spiritual significance. He was no mere craftsman; he was rather a true artist, and his special style brought life back to the Byzantine type, face, hands and body, drapery and general composition, drawing as well as colouring. This special

style is very like that of Cimabue, Duccio, and the Sienese, but is more severe than theirs, still retaining the characteristic strength of the Byzantine religious types, hammered out by the centuries in the Grecian east. This we can see in the faces of the Virgin, the Child, Jesus Christ, Angels, Apostles, and the like; we can see it in the elegant draperies of the 'apostolic vesture', often blown about and restless, but having, so to speak, their own expression as they are penetrated by the artist's desire to express his reverence for the holy personage that they drape. Indeed we might make this characterisation of Rublëv complete by comparing him with Fra Angelico, were it not for a certain risk of the comparison doing an injustice in particular points both to the one and to the other. Rublëv's icons, in close copies, spread not only over the Súzdal' and Moscow regions, but into Volhynia and to the north in Vólogda, Nóvgorod, and Tver'. The old craftsmen found in these the best examples of the severe Byzantine style and the most suitable for devotional use. But only some of Rublëv's icons thus circulated among the other schools of icon-painters. And again we find his name attached to copies of stray models, sometimes to whole iconostases or to *Deesis* groups[99] or such like. Until all the specimens which are now ascribed to Rublëv (ascribed, that is, merely by tradition) have been cleaned, we cannot judge whether we do possess any originals from his hand and if so, which they are.

These icons do exhibit a certain special character and style which we must regard as, essentially, 'Rublëv's touch': in opposition to the Nóvgorod scheme of drawing, simplified to the last degree and executed roughly and carelessly, we now have drawing of extraordinary refinement, that is complicated and even rather fantastic in its draperies. This is certainly not Byzantine drawing, but his contemporaries thought it was, prizing such 'severe Greek' drawing after the Nóvgorod simplification. Next there is the peculiar colouring of dark tints, especially deep purples and the tender pale ivory of faces and flesh. This, also, cannot be called Greek and must be put down to the Venetian and Paduan originals; but his contemporaries knew these originals only in the Greco-Italian rendering and thought that they were really Greek.

So Rublëv's manner has given Russian icon-painting its own peculiar character, but moves in a certain correspondence with the artistic forms of the Greco-Italian school. In icons of the Súzdal' region or originating from Súzdal' we can clearly trace this correspondence. The first place belongs, because of its artistic merit, to an icon of *Our Lady's Tenderness* in the State Russian Museum (frontispiece); the background and haloes were once covered by a worked plate of precious metal. This loss does not lessen its attractiveness, due to its subtle expression. Her eyes are turned towards the Child's baby face, but she does not

see it, they are looking far into the distance, into the fatal future. Of course, the expression of grief is rendered in iconic fashion, stiffly, but it is full of strength and character. A new feature in the drapery is the red sash about the Child; this developed out of the chiton's *clavi*, now no longer intelligible, the chiton is hatched all over with gold (*inokop'*). The Virgin's dark purple cloak is adorned with gold stars, still merely ornamental but later to be interpreted symbolically. Characteristic are the Virgin's slender hands with long thin fingers. A devotional icon of *The Virgin* which no doubt it was dedicated by some princely family, kept once in the monastery of Our Lady's Protection (*Pokrov*) at Súzdaľ', and so can safely be ascribed to Súzdaľ', has been most generously presented by the monastery to the State Russian Museum (No. 3091). This presents a very rare example—it shows the Maiden Mother, so young that we should only give her fifteen, or, considering how early Syrian girls grow up, some thirteen years. There would be no way of accounting for such a conception in icon-painting, if it had not been current in French statuettes and Italian or Flemish Madonnas. The most striking thing about this icon is the face and head of the Child. He has round baby cheeks and seemingly a still unformed head with a tuft of hair on the top, upon the conventional body of the Child. But in this icon there is a restrained movement about the figures which charms the spectator; the Child has bent His right hand in the attitude of blessing and is timidly and uncertainly moving it to make the sign, glancing the while at His Mother, who, delicate and fragile, just touches His hand with her own, and timidly glances aside towards the worshipper. Unfortunately, the Child's vesture was repainted in early times; in the eighteenth century the icon was covered with a silver plate. How far these two icons belong to the Súzdaľ' type of the Virgin, and, further, how far this type does actually go back to Rublëv, we can judge by a series of copies of *Our Lady's Tenderness*. Of particular significance to this question is the Vladimir icon preserved in various churches of central Russia, specially in Súzdaľ' itself where there is, in the cathedral, an icon of this type to which very great reverence is paid. From this icon and from a later modified copy are derived very many sixteenth and seventeenth-century icons in the State Russian Museum and the Moscow icon collections.



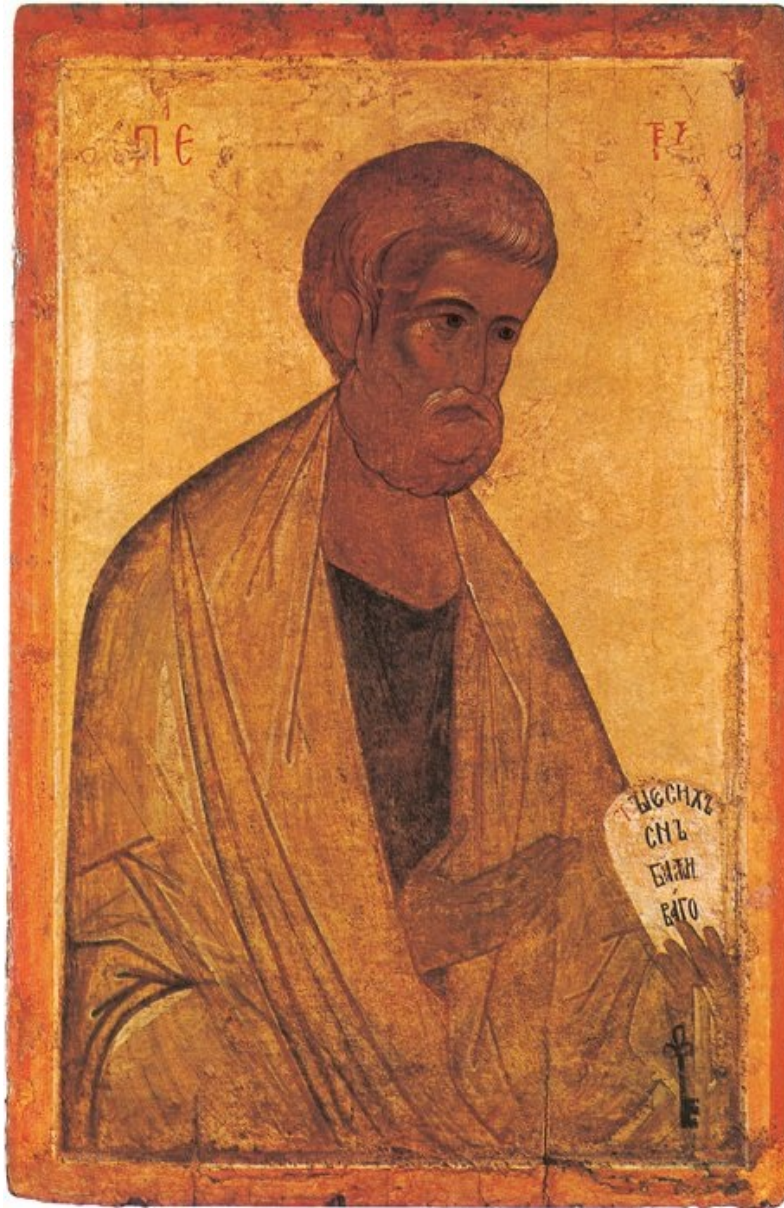
74. Andrei Rublëv, *The Trinity*, 1425.
Egg tempera on plaster on canvas mounted on wood,
36 x 54.2 cm. The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.



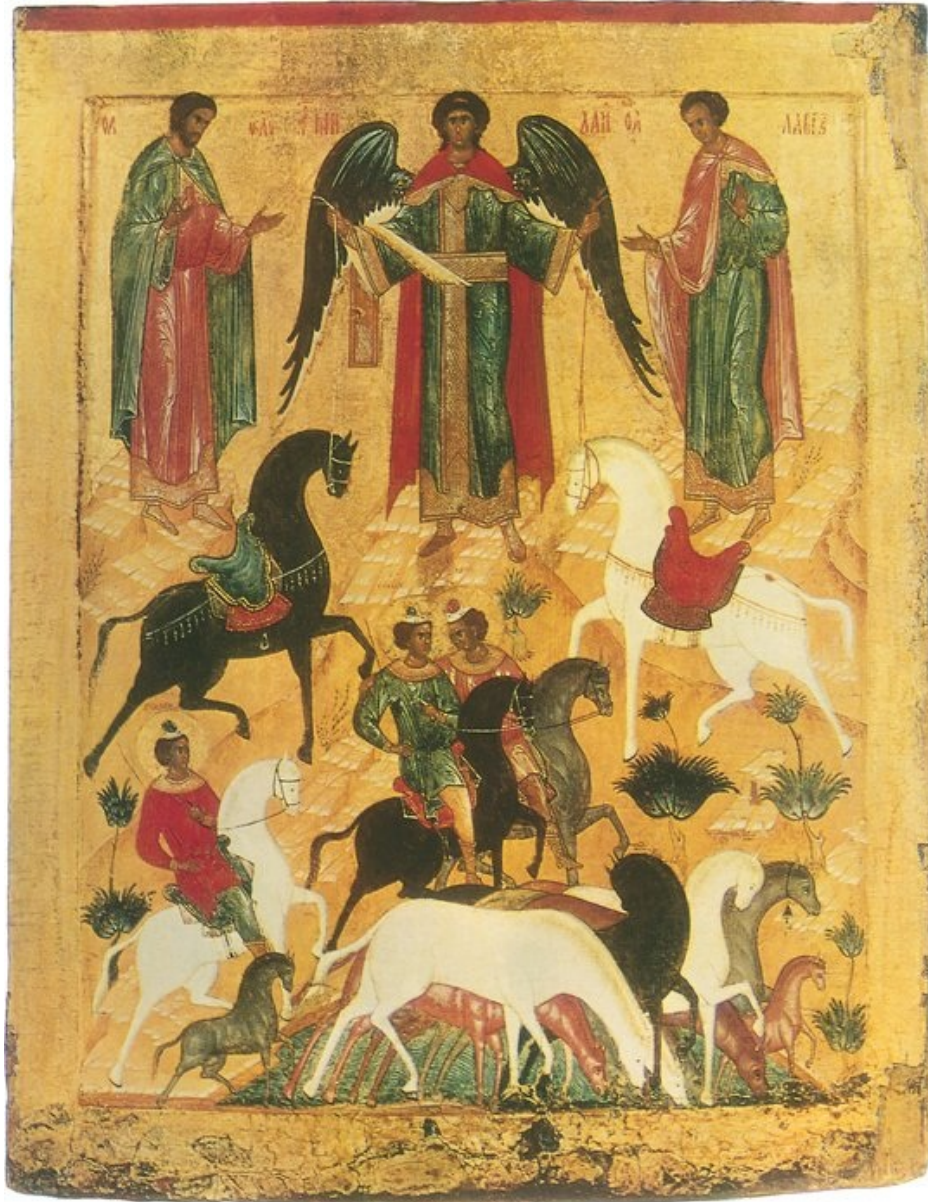
75. *The Transfiguration*, end of the 14th century to the 15th century. Egg tempera on wood, 154 x 101 cm. National Museum, Lviv, Ukraine.



76. Andreï Rublëv (?), *The Saviour in Glory*, c. 411.
Egg tempera on pine panel. 18 x 16 cm.
State Research Institute for Restoration, Moscow.



77. *The Apostle Peter*, 1387-1395.
Egg tempera on plaster on canvas
mounted on wood, 148 x 98 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



78. *The Miracle of Saints Florus and Laurus*,
 Novgorod School, end of the 15th century.
 Egg tempera on lime tree panel, 47 x 37 cm.
 The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

Let us take the best example, a very small icon. When the icon of *Our Lady of the Don* was cleaned in 1914^[100], it was found to belong to the fourteenth century and to be akin in composition to the theme of *Our Lady's Tenderness*, though deriving from a variant. In this case the Mother is not pictured as so deeply grieved; she is rather moved by tenderness and love mixed with a lively sense of the Child's apprehension. The base of the composition is Italian; in its

first form the Child was clothed only in a shirt short enough to show His legs, but the Greek and Russian painters in their copies kept to the traditional 'apostolic' vesture, chiton and himation; the legs being left bare, this has meant a meaningless massing of drapery. The type of Virgin is also different; the face is fuller, more like Duccio's work than Cimabue's. The three Angels who ate at the table of the hospitable Abraham came conventionally to represent the earthly image of the Divine Trinity; this is called the *Old Testament Trinity*. The close connexion between Rublëv and the monastery of S. Sergius, dedicated to the name of the Trinity, naturally made it likely that there should an icon of the Trinity in his hand, but whether the much venerated icon of the Trinity in the Trinity Cathedral of the monastery really reproduces Rublëv's original is much doubted. The interesting fact is that this original is repeated in many copies in all central Russia and even as far as Nóvgorod.

The Nóvgorod schools, for instance, keep to an entirely realistic version of the scene, including Abraham and Sarah, even depicting the preparation of the calf for the meal. At the same time the figures of the Angels are feminine in their full, rounded forms and their faces are in repose as befits an icon. The same may be observed in Greek icons of the Trinity, even though these icons were destined for the upper parts of Royal Doors in an altar screen. On the other hand, the Súzdal' school, which developed the icon for devotional purposes, represents the three Angels alone, without other figures.



79. Andrei Rublëv and assistants, *Deisis, Christ in Majesty Among the Cherubins, Our Lady and Saint John the Baptist, the Apostle Peter and the Apostle Paul*, 14th century. Monumental Icons from the Cathedral of the Dormition, Vladimir. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

Besides these feminine types, Rublëv painted during his lifetime almost the whole cycle of Greek Christian iconography in fresco, and we naturally wonder what his hand should make of the masculine types, strictly ascetic, stern, even gloomy, which so much abounded in Byzantine art. There is the well-known icon of the *Transfiguration* in the church of Our Saviour in the Pinewood at Moscow. Since it has been cleaned it has been recognized as absolutely first-rate in its elegance, soft flesh colour and delicacy, and as belonging, in sentiment, to Rublëv's work^[101]. We must admit that until we are sure of Rublëv's originals we cannot be sure whether we have one of these originals before us. The composition of the *Transfiguration* in the frescoes at Vladimir differs from that of the icon: there the mountains all form one whole, whereas in the icon they are drawn as sharp rocks; the draperies, too, are much simpler, not so much blown out as in the icon, and closer to the strict Byzantine style. Of course, the frescoes were not painted by Rublëv himself but by his pupils or assistant craftsmen, and that may be the reason why they do not give the design which was perhaps created for the icon itself. The icon is especially noticeable for its delicate two-coloured reflexes: on dark purple (*bakán*) the reflexes are light turquoise colour, such as in Giovanni Bellini's work we find upon light silken stuffs; the expression is carried too far, becoming an excessive sentiment and strained reverence. As a whole the painting of the icon shows a close connection with

Italian icons and even pictures of the fifteenth century, but we must at the same time, allow it to be perfectly individual and independent in its refashioning of Greek types.

In general, the fifteenth century was for Russian icon-painting, in its leading schools of Nóvgorod and of Súzdal', was a period of nationalisation, in which a Russian character was given to east Christian art and iconography. Up to this time, everything had been either essentially Greek, or such coarse shopwork that it had no character, and served to be merely formal. The history of Russian art must, in the future, devote itself to throwing light upon this interesting process, by which an imitative craft was transformed into a conscious national art, and how the nation for the first time, made spiritual and artistic demands. But this problem has not been faced even in the West except in Italy and France, where the strength of the movement has made it easy to follow its course. It is very different in Russia where the conditions of life and civilisation were more difficult, both for Nóvgorod and the north-eastern regions colonised by it, which lacked food production, and for Moscow. which had attracted to herself the middle belt of European Russia but was, until 1480, powerless to gain the upper hand in the struggle against the mighty Tartar horde. The artistic phenomena in Russia were the same in kind as in the west, but their force was incomparably weaker both in quantity and in quality of production. If, for instance, we do find in Russia a similar multiplication of icons, and if schools of icon-painting do arise even in the distant monasteries of the north, none the less, these tend towards a style of icon-painting condemned by the general resources of the nation to keep to the old journeyman level, and rarely rising to works of exceptional perfection or the execution of orders commanding really high pay. More important is it that historical analysis should prove that even in this difficult environment of meagre journeyman work, activity of thought and spirit and artistic creation did make their appearance.

For one thing, it is in this period that the devotional icon comes into its own. It becomes a common possession for all segments of society, from the *boyar* or rich merchant who could fit up for himself an oratory or shrine for his icons to the countryman who put his icons up in the 'fair corner'[\[102\]](#) of his cottage. The multiplication of icons proceeds from the multiplication of religious types or scenes held in honour, those of Christ, the Virgin, the saints, and the various festivals. As they increased in number they became each one simpler, and so the popular recasting spread, in obedience to the instinct to repeat a type which has become familiar. At Nóvgorod, the type does not go outside the stiff iconic scheme, but at Súzdal', as it is recast, expression and mood change; everywhere the facial and bodily type is nationalised and becomes that of the Slavs of

Nóvgorod or that of the Great Russian.



80. *The Transfiguration*, 14th century.
Byzantine mosaic, Church of the
Holy Apostles, Thessaloniki.



81. *Anastasis* (wrongly named Descent into Limbo), second half of the 14th century.
Egg tempera on lime tree panel, 149 x 109 cm.
State Research Institute for Restoration, Moscow.



82. *Anastasis* (wrongly named *Descent to the Limbo*), 15th century.
Egg tempera on plaster on canvas, 32.2 x 27 cm.
The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.



83. *Saint George on Horseback enframed
by Scenes from his Life*, 14th century.
The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.

In accordance with the religious cycle, let us begin our survey of iconic types with the Saviour Himself. The Byzantine type of the *Pantocrator*, the Almighty, represented under the form of the God-man, Jesus Christ, is very familiar in its majesty to the eleventh and twelfth-century mosaics of Greece, Constantinople, Sicily, and Venice; in iconic form, it undergoes a certain change. The magnificent Greek icon of the Saviour in the State Russian Museum with the

portraits of the donors, known Byzantine grandees of the middle of the fourteenth century, still retains the sternness of the mosaic countenances on the frame. But later repetitions of the same mosaic type, while keeping the features, soften the expression and give the face of a kindly Saviour[\[103\]](#). Among the most important Nóvgorod icons venerated from ancient days is *Our Lady of Tikhvin*, of which we have already spoken.

As distinct from the Súzdal' school, Nóvgorod kept to the severer types, such as the majestic *Hodegetria of Jerusalem*, of which the most famous example is in the Uspenski Sobór at Moscow. There is a good example of the Nóvgorod school of the fifteenth century in the icon of *Our Lady's Tenderness* (the State Russian Museum, No. 1539)- it is most characteristic in the simplicity of its composition. The Child, troubled by the expression of grief upon His Mother's face, tries to turn her from her thoughts by touching her cheek and chin. This subject comes in a direct line from the Italian Madonnas. But of course, the Russian painter keeps within the bounds of his craft; he does not cross the line dividing it from free painting, and so he does not really render the 'tenderness' of the Mother herself. Her face keeps its sad and painful anxiety, her eyes do not turn to the Child nestling up to her, but look aside; only her hands instinctively press Him to herself. But no more does the face of Lorenzetti's Madonna really give us the 'tenderness'- the Italian master also remained on the edge of mere craftsmanship: the reason no doubt is that he felt his art incapable of expressing living feeling.

Of particular interest is figure of S. John the Baptist in the State Russian Museum, as it is a Nóvgorod copy of an unknown Serbian or south Slav type. Of course, the Russian icon-painters thought of it as Greek, but a comparison with real Greek originals shows an essential difference: the closest parallel is in the frescoes of Zhicha in Serbia. Extremely characteristic is the long lean oval of the face, the thick tangles of hair upon the head, shoulders, and beard (the painters' guides regularly speak of S. John's tangled locks). Then, there is the long lean hooked nose and finally the sad, almost depressed, expression. In general, John the Baptist in Russian art has a majestic mien, but a kindly, rather than melancholy, expression. The Nóvgorod icons of the favourite saints of the fifteenth century are still more various, both in composition and in manner of execution. Cheap shopwork, very rude and careless, was still carried out, but side by side with it appear icons of wonderful refinement, painted with extreme skill. Evidently, the first sort was meant for the common people and the second for the higher classes. The distinction enables us, to some extent, to gauge the popularity of different saints with different classes, and to note the beliefs connected with the icons of the various saints. Icons of Ss. *George, Demetrius*,

Theodore Stratelates, Boris and Gleb are painted in the best style, while *Ss. Elias, Blaise, Nicetas the Martyr, Nicholas Thaumaturgus, John the Baptist* are multiplied in cheap rough work.

Icons showing a warrior on horseback are found in great numbers, both in the State Russian Museum and in all important private collections. These icons come both from Nóvgorod and from Súzdal' and are interesting for their special points both of composition and manner. The chief points of distinction are the types of the saint himself and of his horse, and the artistic manner answers to these differences; the correspondence of form and content convinces us that our hypotheses are sound. The type of *S. George*, that was Byzantine in origin, is different. Instead of the ideal Greek oval we get a particular sort of curly hair, a hooked nose, and high eyebrows meeting over it. Or again, the antique may be almost restored in the Renaissance type of young man. With this goes a change in the temperament of the warrior; either he rises in the stirrup so as to put more force into the lunge with his spear, or he is calmly and unerringly transfixing the monster. The dragon too changes; instead of a long lizard or crocodile, he becomes a serpent with fantastic wings.

Rather different, but in the same manner of complaisant court painters, are the compositions showing *S. Demetrius the Vanquisher of Barbarians*: the 'strategus' sits on a throne treading under his feet an expiring dragon or basilisk. It is curious that this theme is treated at Nóvgorod in icons dating from the first half of the fifteenth century, but Moscow versions of it have not yet been noted. Icons of the *Fiery Ascent of the Prophet Elias* are exclusively derived from Greco-Balkan models; the composition really goes back to the fifth century. The Nóvgorod icons [\[104\]](#) actually recall the Hellenistic or east Greek composition that appears, for instance, upon the sculptured doors of the Basilica of S. Sabina at Rome [\[105\]](#). As in the ancient apotheoses, Elias, standing in the chariot inside a circle of fire or within flames streaming from the fiery horses, mounts heavenwards, pointing to the hand of God which appears at the upper corner in a glory and signifies the divine will. A flying Angel bears up the fiery circle. Below, the Prophet Elisha, astounded and dismayed at this sight, clutches at his teacher's mantle as he is borne away.

Much more interesting are the icons of local saints honoured in the Nóvgorod region. These, the icon-painters had to compose according to the accustomed scheme, but without actual models. Such is the fixed icon of *Ss. Blaise and Spyridion* in S. Blaise's Church at Nóvgorod. The saints are pictured sitting upon thrones in the upper part of the icon, from them fall mountains divided into small rocks with shaly tops (technically termed *pyátóchki*, 'heels', by the icon-painters). On the mountain and at its foot there is a herd of oxen, horses, sheep

and by them, lions. After the same fashion was painted icons of Ss. *Florus and Laurus*, very popular in the Nóvgorod region as patrons of horse-raising; it is full of water meadows along the rivers. S. *Parasceve*^[106] take a particularly conspicuous place in Nóvgorod icon-painting, S. Parasceve being that she that, in very early times, become among the Balkan and north-western Slavs the patroness of trade. Legend spoke of two Ss. Parasceve, a Roman martyr of the Antonine period, and one who suffered at Iconium under Diocletian. The name was given by parents who kept that day holy by fasting and prayer. But the fifth weekday^[107] had always belonged to the female sex and was appropriated to holy women and virgins. It is interesting to note that the icons of S. Parasceve long preserved the early Christian type of a deaconess wearing above her patrician dress a special kerchief surrounding the head and with each end falling from it upon the shoulders; this is the stole that marks the order of deaconesses taking the place of deacons.

We may conclude this chapter by mentioning the appearance in Nóvgorod of icons showing whole families and called '*the Prayer*' (*moléniè*) of that family. Fortunately, in the Nóvgorod Museum is preserved such a one with an inscription of the end of the fifteenth century. 'The servants of God, Gregory, Mary, James, Stephen, Eusebius, Timothy, Olthim (Anthimus) and their children pray the Saviour and the Most Pure Theotokos because of their sins.' The inscription had once a date but now it is impossible to distinguish whether the icon should be placed in 1475 or 1493; the style supports the latter date. The icon is, as it were, presents two stories; above is the *Deesis*, the Saviour on the throne with the open gospel in His left hand, on His right the Virgin, Ss. Michael and Peter, on His left Ss. John the Baptist, Gabriel, and Paul. All the figures are so characteristic in their excessive tallness and the drawing of the folds that we may take the whole composition as belonging to the style of the sixteenth century, the chief representatives of which we shall treat in Chapter VI. Below we have a monotonous string of members of the family, four on one side and three on the other, between the groups two children on a tiny scale, all standing and raising their hands in an identical attitude of prayer. A special carpet-like design semé of stars and short bars covers the floor: it is characteristic of Nóvgorod work of the latter part of the fifteenth century and occurs in other icons in the State Russian Museum and in the Nóvgorod Collection.



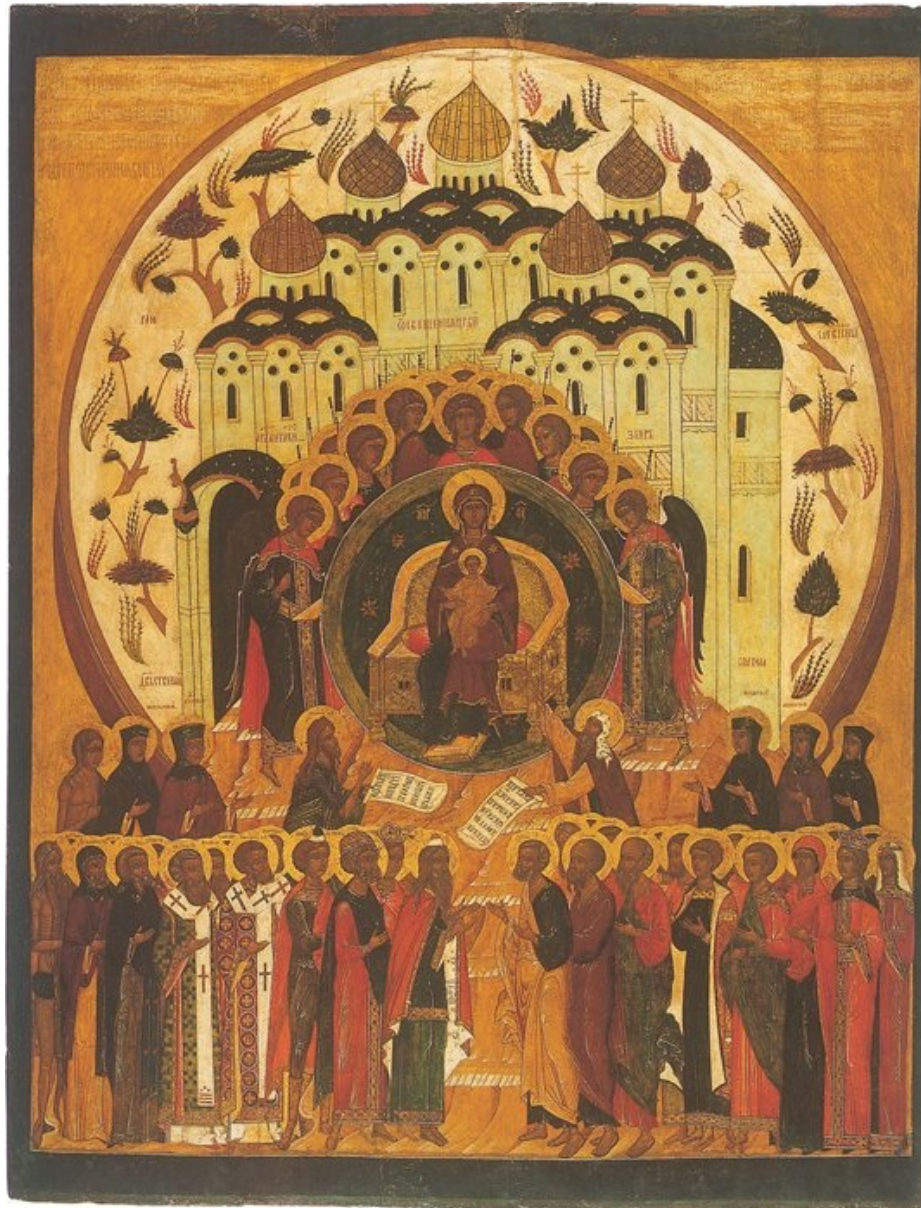
84. *The Archangel Michael* (panel from a Deisis),
15th century. Egg tempera on lime wood, 33 x 50 cm.
From the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross,
Drogobytch, Lviv region, Ukraine.



85. *Saint John Chrysostom* (panel from a Deisis),
15th century. Egg tempera on wood, 93 x 50 cm.
From the Church of the Exaltation of the
Holy Cross, Drogobytch, Lviv region, Ukraine.



86. *Saint John the Baptist*, (panel from a Deisis),
15th century. Egg tempera on wood, 93 x 50 cm.
From the Church of the Exaltation of the
Holy Cross, Drogobytch, Lviv region, Ukraine.



87. *Glorification of the Virgin, "In Thee Rejoiceth",*
Rostov the Great, second half of the 16th century.
154 x 120 cm. From the church in the village Troitsa-Bor near
Rostov the Great. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



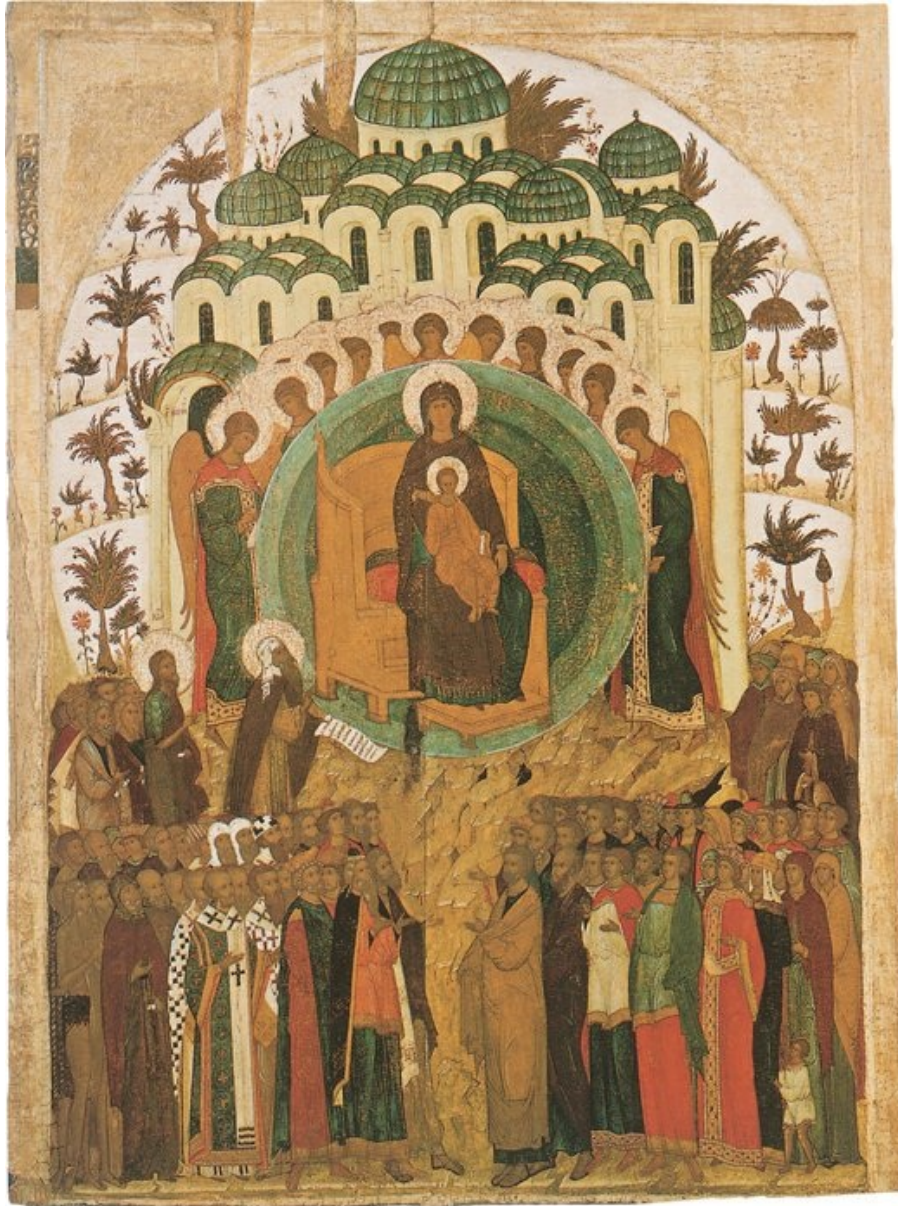
The 16th Century

Mystical and Didactic Subjects

Works of art must be analysed from two points of view: the artistic form and the spiritual content, but this analysis is one, as form and content are each the immediate condition of the other and depend one upon the other. At the first, theoretical, glance it would appear that form is the decisive, since it is the forms power that condition the possibility of expressing the subject in execution. This attitude is natural and necessary as long as art lives independently, but when it begins to borrow from external models the fashion of its development changes and with it that of the artistic handicraft. Such has been the position of European art in general ever since the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the great artistic upward movement that we are accustomed to call the Renaissance finished its work, and there was attained, as it were, a definite artistic mould recognised by almost all Europe as perfect, or at least generally acceptable, and as the only conceivable basis for further progress. At this moment came the culmination of the creative process in French religious art and there set in a period of neglect which destroyed in countless numbers the masterpieces that filled the churches at the close of the Middle Ages. The next stage was the elaboration of the results achieved by the genius and skill of Raphael, Michelangelo, and Da Vinci, and at the same time a worship of them as being the perfection of art, at least upon the side of form. The circle of artists who were responsible for this aesthetic valuation proclaimed that the perfection they had attained was the model that all should imitate, side by side with the antique. Naturally Eastern Europe hastened to adopt certain forms of this art and apply them to its own religious craft, all the more so because in the sixteenth century

the west was still continuing to treat religious subjects. The famous Panselinos, working at Protaton on Mount Athos about 1540, used the artistic models of Italy in order once more to renew Byzantine art by the forms and methods of Italian painting, and it is clear that Panselinos was not the only one. As the representative of a special level of craftsmanship, Panselinos is put by himself in the Greek painters' guides, but mention is also made of the Italo-Cretan painting and its head, with Theophanes the Cretan, who was working on Athos at about the same time, decorating the chief church of the Lavra in 1535[108]. These two schools only differed in manner and were not in opposition to each other. However, Panselinos is not to be considered a representative of the Venetian craft of icon-painting in the same way that we can assert this of the Italo-Cretans, as both Venice and Crete have the same rich deep colouring and have passed it on to their derivatives.

The icons of the sixteenth century, whether Greek or Russian, and of both the Nóvgorod and of the earliest Moscow schools, have something in common about their style and some kinship with Italian design in the sixteenth century and the Venetian colouring. But the general look continues to impress upon us that Greek icon-painting, in every respect, held fast to the fundamental Byzantine type. This makes all the questions involving western influence on east European art very subtle and complicated. It is a case of similar artistic processes going on simultaneously, but taking their own course quite separately.



88. Workshop of Dionysius (*Dionisii*),
Glorification of the Virgin, "In Thee Rejoiceth",
15th to 16th century. 146 x 110 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



89. Vanivka and Zdvyzen, *The Nativity of Our Lady*,
16th century. Vanivka (at present in Poland).
National Museum, Lviv.

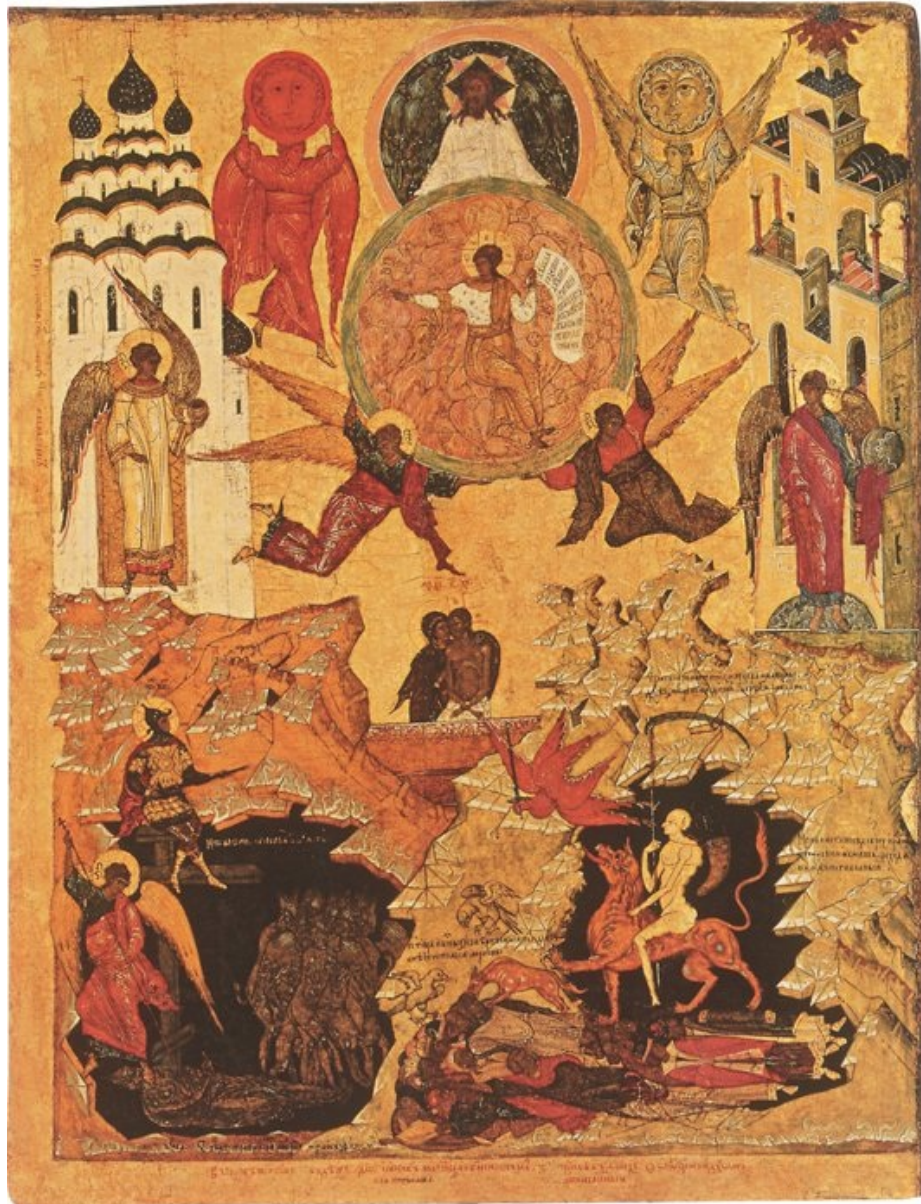
The more characteristic and surprising is the parallel between east and west which we can observe in the content of religious art. At the end of the fifteenth century east Greek icon-painting, and after it, that of Russia began a long-enduring process by which the subjects treated were extended to embrace a number of mystical and didactic themes unknown to Byzantium. *S. Sophia – the Divine Wisdom*, an idea long familiar to Byzantium but only in the late fifteenth

century embodied and represented upon a Greek icon; *The Only-Begotten Son – The Word of God; The Fatherhood of God; In the Grave in the Flesh; Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord; Let us come, ye People, and, worship God in three Persons; The Six Days; God rested on the Seventh Day; Credo; Pater Noster; It is meet to glorify thee, Theotokos; In thee rejoiceth, Gracious One (B.V.M.), every Creature; The Praise of the Theotokos; The Burning Bush; The Assembly of Our Lady*[\[109\]](#); *The Assembly of the Archangel Michael; The Assembly of the Archangel Gabriel; All Ss. Sunday; Mid-Pentecost; The Liturgy*[\[110\]](#); *The Indiction; The Vision of Eulogius; The Restoration of the Church of the Resurrection, and suchlike.*

With the appearance of the didactic subjects there began during the fourteenth century a growing complication of the whole iconography of the Eastern Church. This affected both the compositions of the *Festivals* telling the story of Christ, the Virgin, and of the Church, and also the subjects for the iconostases[\[111\]](#). In these there appeared the Orders (*Chiný*) or tiers of Prophets and Patriarchs, representations of the sages of antiquity, the parables, and subjects from the monastic cycle, edifying, didactic, anecdotic, highly composite and including many figures. A feature of these compositions is that they are not so much artistic as literary, many of them illustrating and incorporating prayers, canticles and formulae used in the service of the Church, but that it will require much work to seek out in Greek and Russian texts the passages which have given rise to all of them and to order them in an historical group. We can but select a few outstanding examples from this class and give these only in late versions. If we apply to this special group the general name of '*didactic icons*', which will serve until a better can be found, we shall definitely exclude the prejudice with which some interpreters approach the matter – a prejudice that makes them find in these icons a deep and mystical symbolism and ascribe it all to the spirit of the Russian people. As a matter of fact, this symbolism was elaborated by the Greek monastic icon-painting of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. We cannot indeed so far point to Greek originals for all these subjects, but their descriptions in the Greek painters' guides are as good evidence as actual works of art, and we must constantly bear in mind that further study of icons in the Grecian east will reveal to us many originals. It is equally wrong to deny the existence of any mystical side to the Greek models; a symbolic manner of presenting both subjects and details has been the constant practice of Christian art from the first beginnings of icon-painting in the east. Of course, there is no denying that such didactic themes encouraged both monks and laymen in ancient Russia to apply ill-understood reading to a consciously superior delight in far-fetched interpretations and edifying divinations[\[112\]](#).

Of course, at the base of all iconographic subjects was religion, and faith is yoked to mystic presentation. It is our business to make clear this religious basis. However, there is no need to read symbolic significance and see spiritual illumination in the fact that the lions on each side of *Daniel* are painted different bright colours.

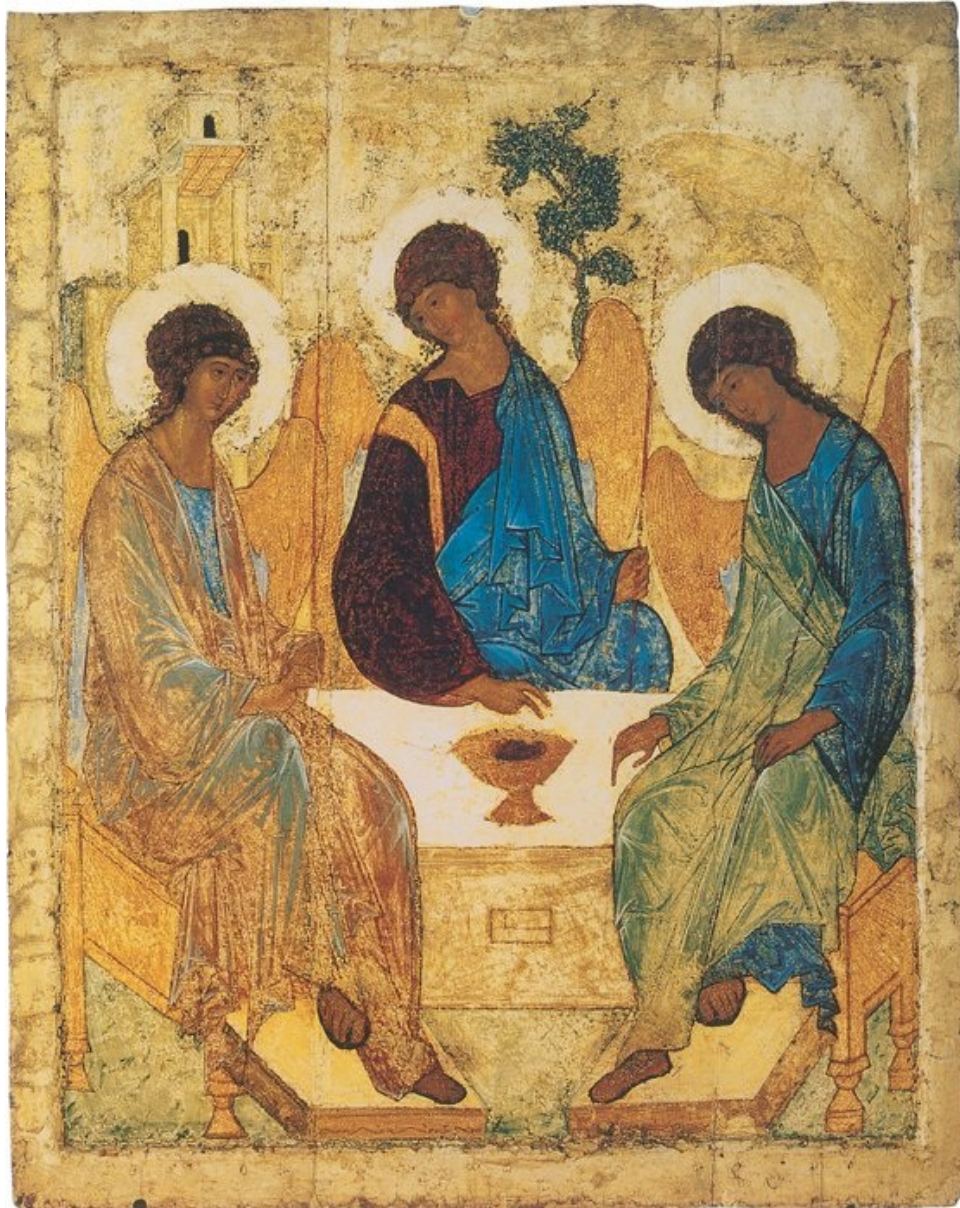
The chief mark of these innovations is the very great number of figures, (amounting sometimes to hundreds), introduced into the composition and the complicated architectural scenery required to find places for them. In the west, and particularly in Italy, themes derived from illustrations to manuscripts only rarely passed into wall-painting for the simple reason that this province was now specialised and had worked out its own iconographic cycles. Still, at Padua and more over, at Venice, thanks to the Greek and Greco-Italian icon-painting that flourished there, we find painters working upon the same didactic line and evidently borrowing from illuminated manuscripts.



90. *The Only-Begotten Son*, 1553-1554.
One panel from a four-panel icon.
Cathedral of the Annunciation, Moscow.



91. Vanivka and Zdvyzen, *The Discovery and Exaltation of the Holy Cross*, middle of the 16th century. On the sides, from left to right, are represented, The Entry to Jerusalem, The Old Testament Trinity, The Transfiguration, The Pentecost, The Crucifixion, The Baptism of Christ or Theophany, The Deposition from the cross, The Entombment and the Deploation, Anastasis (wrongly named Descent into Limbo), The Ascension, The Nativity of Christ. Coming from Zdvyzen, (at present in Poland). National Museum, Lviv, Ukraine.



92. Andreï Rublëv, *The Hospitality of Abraham or The Trinity*, around 1420. 142 x 114 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



93. *Our Lady's Protection*, "Pokrov",
16th century. Private Collection.



94. Franghias Kavertzias, *Glorification of the Virgin*
"In Thee Rejoiceth", Cretan School, 1640.
 Roger Cabal Collection.

The title *The All-wisdom of God* (*Sophia Premúdrosf Bózhiya*) is applied to two entirely different compositions; the first, a Nóvgorod subject, which afterwards in favour at Moscow, arose from an ancient interpretation taken from a psalter explained with illustrations. It shows an Angel within a church holding up its roof; a fiery Angel sits upon a throne, with the Blessed Virgin and S. John the Baptist before him. Later, this icon received a special heading to explain that the Angel takes the place of the Saviour-the God-Man: 'Thou art fairer than the

children of men' (Ps.xlv. 2). The latter form, best known at Kiev, blends [Sophia with the Wisdom](#) (as in Proverbs), who is the Virgin, the central point of the Christian Church at its foundation; this is clearly a copy of a Greek original, spread in south Russia under the influence of the Moldavo-Wallachian school[\[113\]](#).

As dogmatic representations of the God in Three Persons we have the subjects *The Coal of Isaiah* (Isa. vi. 6) and *The Lord God in Powers*, that is, the Lord of Hosts[\[114\]](#), among the cherubim and seraphim, the Virgin as interceding for mortals, and a circle with Emmanuel[\[115\]](#). A simpler rendering is *Paternity* (*Otéchestvo*), God the Father sits on a throne holding Emmanuel upon His knees and the Holy Spirit descends upon Him in the form of a dove: or perhaps later the Father and Son side by side. A widely spread theme was *Our Saviour of the Blessed Silence* (*Spas Blagóe Molchánie*), which entailed a half-length of an Angel, his arms crossed upon his breast in a star-shaped nimbus, representing Jesus Christ before the Incarnation. This is the most interesting of the people's devotional icons; by its very subject it should quiet the troublesome emotions of life and impart an atmosphere of prayer. This effect should be produced by the most exalted religious idea of the Son of Man, who brought to the world the understanding of God as being near to man and every man's Heavenly Father.

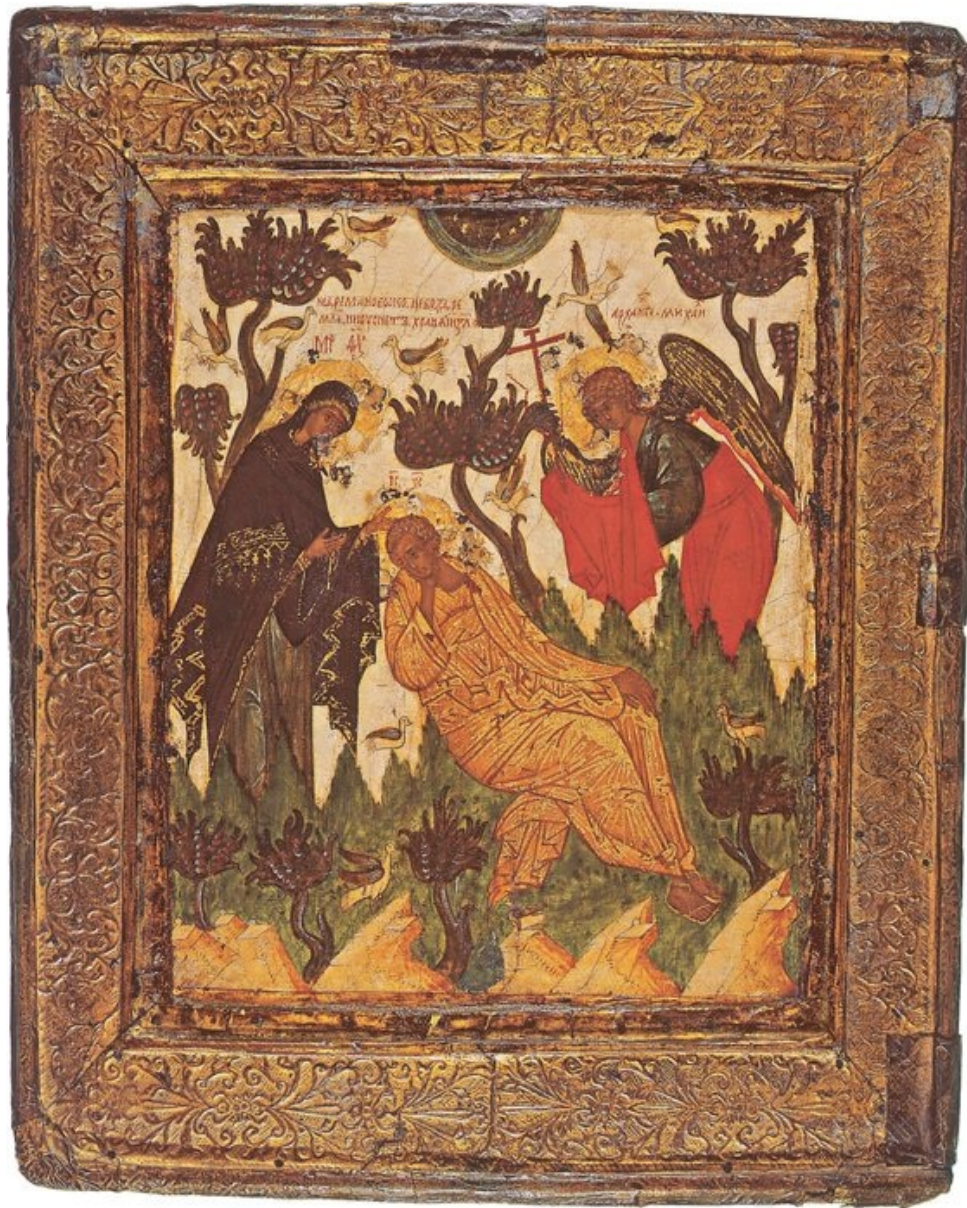
On the other hand the subjects *Praise ye the Name of the Lord* or *Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord*, founded on Psalms cxlviii, cxlix, cl and derived from illuminated psalters, were in favour from the end of the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. They were complicated and picturesque: rendered on a great scale with many human and animal figures, they produced a monumental effect covering the sides of the principal piers in the churches of Nóvgorod, Pskov, and Moscow. Among the Greeks the subject covered the walls of corridors or porches, but in Russia it became something more than edifying.

The Only-begotten Son and Word of God was a favourite subject with Moscow icon-painters in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; It is an extreme example of tortured scholastic thought. At first it was of an ordinary size, but became smaller and smaller till it was no more than eight inches (20 cm) high. This was one of the icons which most aroused the indignation of Viskováty the Clerk. The parts which make up the whole are connected by externals only: they are the product of a scholastic attempt to display a solution of the problems involved in the earthly life of the God-Man.

At the top, in the centre, flanked by the angels of the 'Sun' and 'Moon', is a medallion lettered 'Let us worship the Father and the Holy Spirit', who appear within it. Below the words 'Save us', and around an oval, we read 'One Son' and 'Holy Trinity'. This oval is supported by 'Angels of the Lord'. In it is 'Jesus

Christ' among the Cherubim, holding a roundel with the Four Beasts and a scroll inscribed 'The Only-begotten Word of God, being immortal and without beginning'. On His right, backed by buildings inscribed 'The Cup of the wrath of God', is an Angel with a chalice, and behind him the Virgin. By her, on the frame, the words 'Who didst deign for our sake to be incarnate by the Theotokos, the Ever-Virgin Mary, and wast indubitably made man' appear, and below, 'and wast crucified, God Christ'. On the other side an Angel, with the word 'Holy' in a roundel, backed by buildings inscribed 'God has arisen from Sion to judge the people'. Below, in the centre, the *Pietà*, a western subject, called in Russian *Mother weep not for Me* occurs as a separate icon, as does the *Entombment*, called *In the Grave in the Flesh*, another importation from the west derived from the fifteenth century development of the iconography of the Passion. With these belong icons of the Crucifixion, complicated with pictures of the instruments of the Passion and inscribed explanations.

Akin to these new scenes of the Passion are three new additions to the series of Festivals; the icon for *Mid-Pentecost*[\[116\]](#), celebrating Christ's first reading in the Temple; *The Procession of the Venerable Wood of Our Lord's Life-giving Cross* and *The Commencement of the Indiction*. They are of general interest as proof of the way ancient religious traditions were preserved in the Russian Church and worked into the life of the people in old Russia. For instance, the *Procession of the Holy Cross* recalls the ancient festival held in Byzance on the 1st of August to celebrate the consecration with a piece of the True Cross of a spring and bathing pool outside the sea wall of the city. At the top is a five domed church, before it the *Deesis*, Christ flanked by the Virgin and S. John Baptist; beyond them 'S. John Chrysostom' and 'S. Basil the Great'. Below are 'the sick men in the pool'. It is curious that the Cross is not to be seen. The inset shows 'Holy Martyrs Maccabees: seven brothers in the flesh, their mother Salomonea, and their teacher Eleazar', whose festival was on the same day.



95. *Our Saviour of the Unsleeping Eye*, end of the 13th century.
Icon Museum, Recklinghausen, Germany.



96. *The Redeemer Amongst the Angels*,
second half of the 16th century.
Petrozavodsk Museum, Petrozavodsk, Russia.

Next to *The Commencement of the Indiction*, that is to say of the New Year^[117]. The fine icon represents the festival which made holy the beginning of the year, upon the 1st of September. The subject is Christ's preaching at Nazareth (Luke iv. 16-19), beginning with the words upon the book, 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me' and ending, 'to preach the acceptable year of the Lord'. No Greek icon of this subject is known. This remarkable icon (a copy of one

actually executed for one of the Stróganovs) shows us not Nazareth but the Temple at Jerusalem (though town walls are perfectly Russian) and an open court in front of it in which is set up a lectern for the preacher between the groups of 'Jews' and 'Apostles'. The idea was that the New Year was celebrated in order that it might be acceptable for Christians.

Another edifying subject is the illustration to Genesis entitled *God Rested on the Seventh Day*. It was intended to bring to the Christian's remembrance, on the Sunday day of rest, the history of the first days of Creation, the Fall and Cain's first sin. In the upper part the Creator is represented as God the Father; this goes against the Greek rule forbidding the representation of God in any form but that of the Word, the God-Man, or else in the form of Angels, messengers from the Supreme Council of the Trinity. At one side of this is a representation of *God the Father 'in powers'*, that is, among the stars and powers or host of heaven and a roundel with the Byzantine subject of *Our Lady with the Sign*, bearing Emmanuel upon a medallion, and also God the Father seated on a throne, holding before Him the Crucified Son who again stands by His side holding in His hands the roll of the Gospel. Below there is a view of Paradise, an enclosed garden with various beasts[\[118\]](#).

Our Saviour of the Unsleeping Eye is a symbolic subject, much in favour amongst Greek fresco-painters. It passed into the later Russian icon-painting and became part of the set of subjects illustrating the *Akathist of Our Lady*. It is essentially an incident in the Flight into Egypt, transmuted by the Greeks into a fanciful scene. The sleeping Child lies in the midst of a garden, but upon a couch with His eyes open. His sleep is watched by His Mother and an Angel who holds the instruments of the Passion. Another fans him.

A large number of symbolic and didactic subjects were devoted, from the end of the fifteenth century, to the Virgin. The first place may be given to the icon entitled *The Assembly of the Theotokos*; it embodies the significance of a special festival held on the 26th of December, the day after the celebration of Christ's Nativity. It mechanically illustrates the chief hymns of the Christmas service and so has a narrowly didactic character. A curious survival from the antique is that the Earth and the Desert are personified as bringing their respective gifts, the cave and the manger[\[119\]](#). It must be added that such a detail as the herbs within the manger is to be taken literally as the hay, not as a symbol of the new birth that has arisen since the Nativity. Nor is the ordinary Byzantine cushion, put on the ground to sit on, to be called a sack of grain and interpreted symbolically.

No icon set up to the glory of the Virgin more commonly adorns a church than that called *In thee rejoiceth*. The title comes from an anthem beginning 'In thee rejoiceth, Gracious One, every creature; the Quire of the Angels and the race of

Man, reasonable Paradise, praise of Virgins which follows the prayer of consecration in the Liturgy of S. Basil. The icon is certainly modelled upon *Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord*, and occurs in Greek work; but we must allow special artistic merit to the Russian copyists who recast these models towards the end of the fifteenth century after the best Novgorod style, *e.g.* the example in the church of Ss. Peter and Paul at Nóvgorod. Under the titles *Praise to the Theotokos* and *From above the Prophets foretold thee*, similar compositions found favour in the Moscow school, but in them was adopted a Western fashion which is unsuitable to icons. Each Prophet bears a scroll with a long quotation of praise, and each figure holds prominently an emblem: David, the Ark of the Covenant; Solomon, a model of the Temple; Daniel, a rock; Moses, the bush; Aaron, the rod that budded; Zacharias, a sickle; Jacob, a ladder; Ezekiel, a door; Isaiah, a coal; Gideon, a fleece of wool; Habakkuk, a mountain[120].

Still more complicated is the icon that illustrates the anthem *It is meet indeed to glorify thee, the Theotokos*[121] as it is divided into four parts, each generally similar in composition, with small variations in the lower groups and in the posture of the Virgin, sitting or standing. Once again, I must insist upon the bad effect of this monastic and didactic turn upon the artistic side of icon-painting: a good case is the subject called *The Annunciation of the Passion*. Towards the end of the fifteenth century the influence of Italian painting gained so much power over Greco-Oriental icon-painting that there even came into being an icon of *Our Lady of the Passion*[122] which afterwards passed to Moscow, where, in honour of a miraculous icon of this name, was founded the great nunnery of the Passion. The Virgin, bearing the Child upon her left arm, sees Angels bringing the instruments of Christ's Passion, the cross and spear. The Archangel Gabriel has likewise brought a cross and the Virgin turns to the Child who has half shrunk away and caught hold of her. So, iconography invented a second Annunciation announcing evil tidings: the Virgin asks the Archangel why he wounds her by reminding her of Simeon's prophesy, 'a sword shall pierce thine own heart' [*sic*], and the Angel replies, 'It behoves the Son of Man to suffer much and to be crucified and to rise again the third day'.

Upon the *Assembly of the Theotokos* were modelled the *Assembly of the Archangels Gabriel and Michael*, the *Assembly of the Heavenly or Bodiless Powers*, even an *Assembly of All Saints* or *All Saints Sunday*.

At first, of course, these icons were meant for churches, especially in monasteries, with the idea of educating people and adorning porches, corridors, piers in churches and refectories; finally they came to be put upon the lectern to receive reverence on the festivals of All Saints. These icons with many figures

began to multiply even for devotional purposes, at first for icon shrines and then, as the taste for these detailed[\[123\]](#) icons spread, they were produced for the regular market, because it was cheaper to buy one icon than many, and there was always the fear of incurring the disfavour of one saint by giving greater honour to others.

We might have expected the Gospel parables, with their edifying contents, to find their way into the cycle of didactic subjects, but neither the Greeks nor the Russians had much room either for wall-paintings of them or for icons, in either church or in private use. The Greek monasteries did paint on the walls of refectories and corridors, such subjects as the *Spiritual Ladder*, the *Pharisee and Publican*, *The Ten Virgins*, the *Good Samaritan* and *Dives and Lazarus*, and these were ordered by Russians for icons and *kiots*. Likewise, the story of the *Lame Man* took either Greek or Russian compositions which had been made to go into series of festivals, for the parable of the Fig Tree was read upon Easter Monday, that of the Ten Virgins on Easter Tuesday, that of the Publican gave its name to the Sunday before Septuagesima. Other parables were generally painted only on the frames of big icons and offer little interest either for their composition or execution. Such a one is the seventeenth-century *Ten Virgins*, in it Christ appears in the form 'Emmanuel upon the Cherubim'.

A very high degree of elaboration was reached by the quadruple icons (sets of four) made to adorn four-square piers in churches and continuing the early use of pictures to edify the illiterate. The State Russian Museum has three icons of such a set: *The Vision of S. Eulogius*, *The Spiritual Ladder of S. John Climacus*, and the *Story of the Lame Man*; excellent Nóvgorod work of the sixteenth century[\[124\]](#). *The Vision of Eulogius* exhibits an edifying picture of Angels in a monastery court distributing to the poor, gold, silver, and holy bread out of baskets – a symbol of monastic care for the poor – but the scene has been divided into groups and given a second dogmatic meaning by the introduction of two Holy Bishops bending in adoration before a chalice upon an altar.

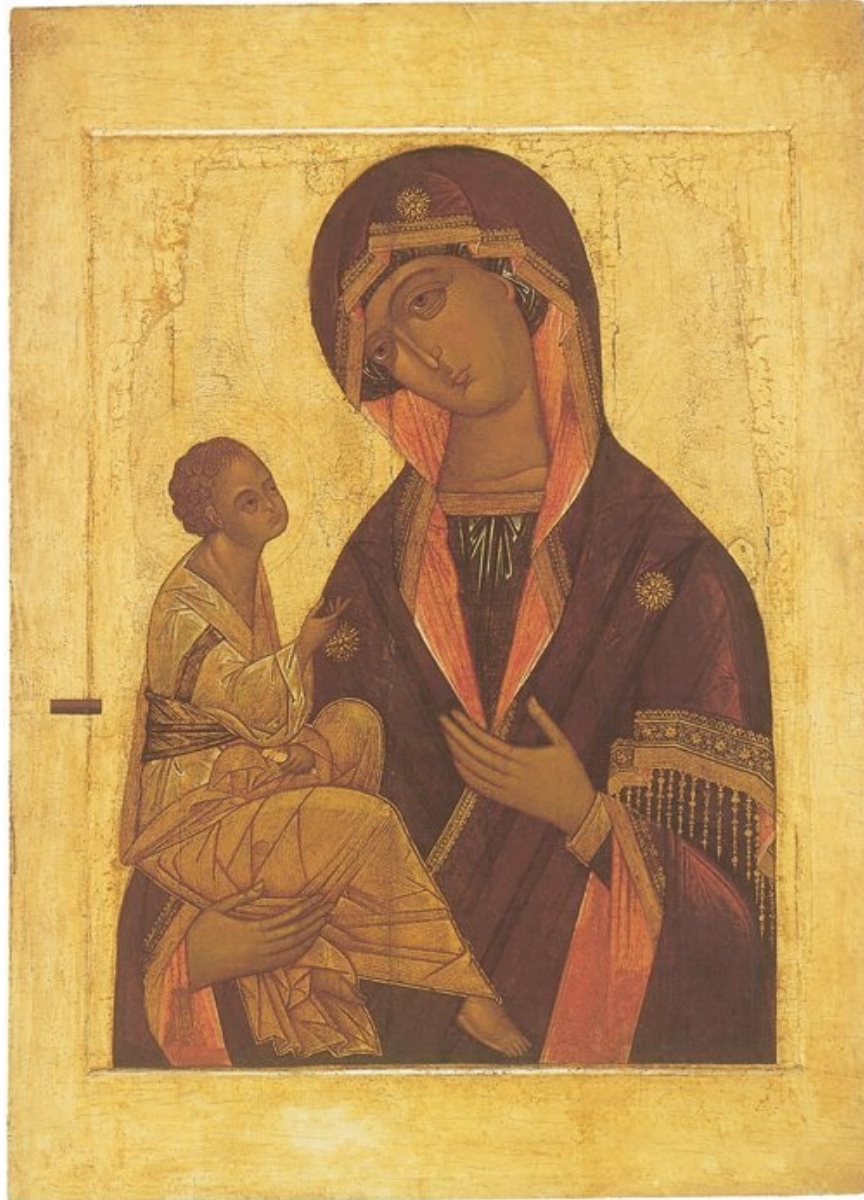
In the fifteenth century the iconostases began to get more crowded. First, there were the complex fixed icons; surrounding the great icon of the saint to whom a church was dedicated would be the incidents of his life, the Akathist scenes round icons of the Virgin, or else the Festival icons of the events in her life, and similar Festivals round icons of Christ. There was the regular tier of Great Festivals, and the *Deesis* tier. Now the edifying icons were added at the very bottom and also upon the side doors in the screen.



97. Dionysius (Dionisii), *Glorification of the Virgin, "In Thee Rejoiceth"*, 1502-1503. Fresco.
Ferapontov Monastery, Vologda region, Northern Russia.



98. Workshop of Dionysius (Dionisii),
Our Lady Hodegetria, 15th to 16th century.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



99. *The Virgin of Jerusalem*, Novgorod,
middle of the 16th century. 110 x 80 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



100. Workshop of Dionysius (Dionisii),
Our Lady Hodegetria, 15th to 16th century.
 38 x 28 cm. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

The north door of the screen in Ss. Peter and Paul at Nóvgorod (early sixteenth century) gives a very interesting example of a didactic scheme. Above, upon a magnificent throne within a circle, the Virgin sits in prayer, her hands raised to her breast and the palms turned forwards: on each side an Angel bows toward her. All about, leaves and shoots of plants spring upwards; they make the circle into Paradise with the Queen of Heaven, like a 'garden enclosed'. This

idea comes from the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite, who stands outside to the left. Below, in the same garden, is the scene called *Abraham's Bosom*, the three Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with the souls of the righteous, and before them the Penitent Thief who has just entered Paradise with his cross. A Seraph is guarding the gate. At the bottom one sees a mountainous desert and a monastery. Four monks have ventured outside the building and are looking with horror at a skeleton found within a stone coffin: this is the *Vision of S. Sisoës* or Sisynnios, that is described in the long inscription.

It was at the end of the fifteenth century that fixed form was given to the composition of *Our Lady's Protection (Pokróv)*. This was originally an illustration of the festival of the 1st of October^[125], instituted to keep in mind an ancient hallowed legend, but had, by this point, become an allegorical representation of Mary's intercession for men before God. The word *Pokróv* means 'covering', and is used alike for Mary's intercession or protection, and for her covering or cloak, for which the customary word is *mafori*, a cloak rather than a veil, falling upon the head and shoulders and draping the whole figure. In all the Grecian east, it was the usual garment for married women and widows. This name *Pokróv* is used in the Russian Church for a festival quite unknown to the Greek and Oriental churches^[126]. S. Andrew, the Fool for Christ's sake (*Yuródivy*), a Scythian slave in the reign of Leo the Philosopher (A.D. 886), saw the Virgin enter the church of Ss. Sergius and Bacchus, or in later versions that of Blachernae in Constantinople, with Ss. John the Baptist and John the Divine and a great train of Apostles, Prophets, and Saints. When she prayed, Christ appeared in person, finally she held up her veil over all present as a symbol of her intercession for the whole human race. Andrew was accompanied by Epiphanius, afterwards the Patriarch Polyeuctus, and the miraculous sight was vouchsafed to him as well. Now this vision, which took form in the ninth century, is a legendary reflection of something which really happened. In the Greek Church we know of no celebration of this vision, but it seems as if one of the early Greek bishops in Russia, perhaps coming from Blachernae, saw its possibilities and instituted a festival on the 1st of October. This day belonged to S. Romanus the Hymn-writer, a deacon of the Blachernae church, and he had to be brought in. The festival appears in a calendar of the thirteenth century, and the first church named after it was built in Nóvgorod in 1305; most churches of this dedication belong to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

In representing the *Pokróv* there was hesitation between showing the curtain supported by Angels, on the whole the older type, really giving the Friday miracle and a closer adherence to the text of the legend with the Virgin herself holding up her cloak. To the first class belongs the very earliest picture of the

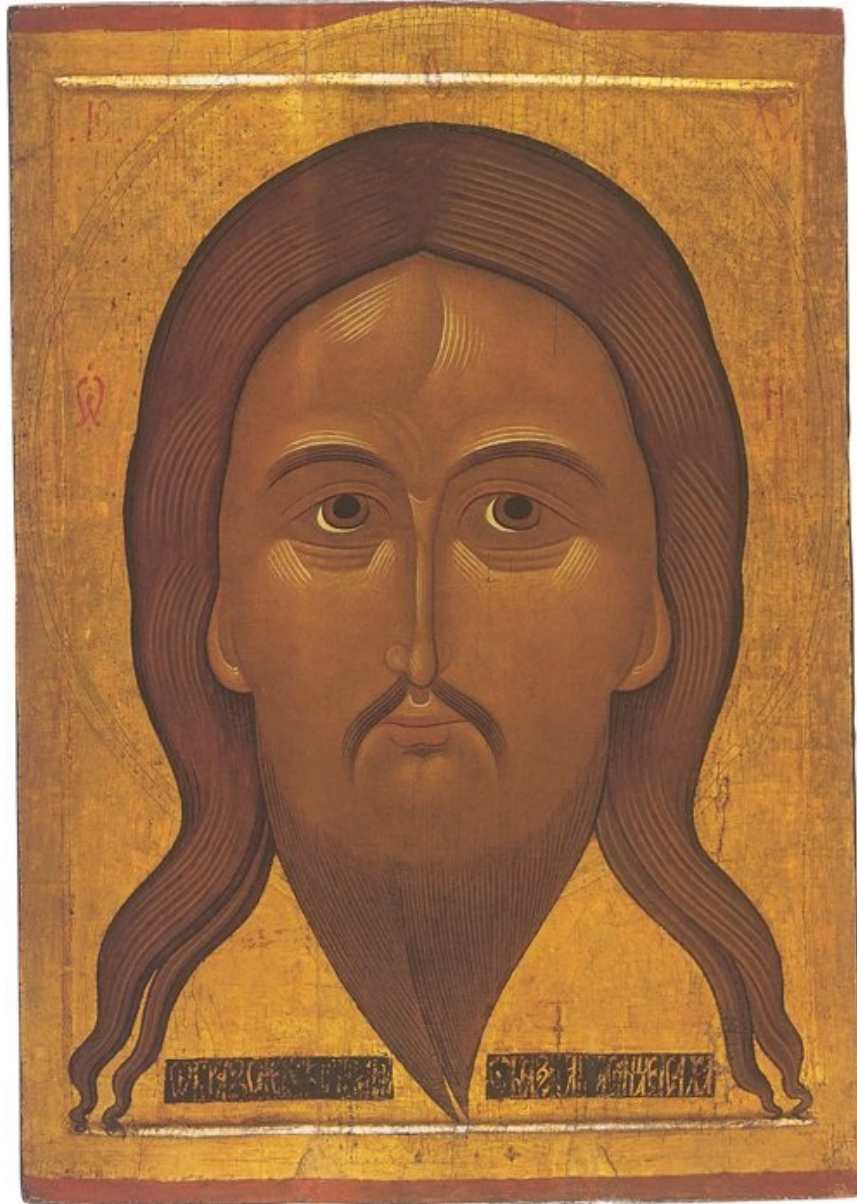
subject, a panel of damascened bronze in the doors of Súzdal' Cathedral, set up by Prince Michael Yaroslávich (d. 1248), showing very clearly the curtain rolled up above the Virgin and the Angels with her[\[127\]](#); an icon in the Ostroúkhov Collection, belonging to the end of the fifteenth century[\[128\]](#), shows the same idea developed so as generally to anticipate its full expression in the early sixteenth century in the splendid icon in the State Russian Museum. We have a section through a great five-domed church taken upon the line of the raised step (*solea*) which runs across just in front of the apse: only the roof and domes are viewed as from the outside, while the interior is divided into three or five aisles. Above is the figure of Christ, as it were giving the blessing from the half-dome of the apse. Below him the Virgin stands upon a cloud and raises her hands in prayer. On each side the quires and orders of Angels, Holy Bishops, Saints, and Confessors are ranged in the galleries of the church behind a parapet or railings. Finally, below, we have S. Andrew and Epiphanius with other, sundry figures. The cloak appears in the oldest painted icon of the subject, that in the church of S. Nicholas Kochány at Nóvgorod, an icon dated 1391 but probably not earlier than the end of the following century[\[129\]](#). This version found favour with the Moscow school of the sixteenth century, but later still the composition was remodelled so that the perfect symmetry is given up and the scene is viewed from the side. It is certain that the appearance in western iconography of the Virgin in the attitude of protecting worshippers by covering them with her mantle, is ultimately due to the east.

The icon in the State Russian Museum is a most exceptional example of icon-painting both in style (it may be by the hand of Dionysius himself), and giving many characteristic details of Russian invention that leaves the Greek models far behind. Of course the Russians are a hundred years behind and their creative power moves within closely defined limits, but in this icon we have a work equal in power to the paintings of the Venetian and Paduan masters of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, and, if we put them side by side we find many analogies. First we find a definite indication of the place where the miracle is happening. Above the great church can be seen the massive porphyry column with the equestrian statue of Justinian which once stood near S. Sophia; to remove all doubt it is labelled 'Tsar Ustin' and the view is not unlike a fourteenth-century sketch still preserved[\[130\]](#). It is true that the scene of the vision was in the church of Blachernae, but there is nothing very surprising in its having been transferred to the Great Church. Again, the view of the church is not at all like the real S. Sophia, both outside and, even less so within. But we have curious evidence that this was not the fault of the Russian icon-painters, who did their best to get real views of the Great Church.

In the icon before us S. Sophia is represented, but it is S. Sophia at Nóvgorod, as may be seen from the gablets upon its roof. Yet the above story proves that the Russian Church and the icon-painters themselves took trouble to make their icons like and had no idea of any transcendental art of painting which knew and rendered nothing real; such an art only exists in the imaginations of our aesthetes. But of course, our icon-painters were very poor in exact and historical knowledge, and they failed to distinguish between Blachernae and S. Sophia at Constantinople.

So in this icon of the *Pokrón*, as in others, they painted Christ in the highest place, next the curtain supported by 'Michael' and 'Gabriel': then the Virgin praying just where the apse comes, above the Royal Doors: she is flanked by the 'Orders of Martyrs, Holy Bishops, Prophets, Apostles, Confessors, and women Saints'. This tier all stands upon clouds, though the side groups are really in the galleries of the church. Below, upon firm ground, Romanus the Hymn-writer, vested as a deacon, stands upon an ambo before the Royal Doors, in his hand is a scroll which should bear the words 'The Virgin this day bears Him that is above being'. The ambo is of just the same round shape as the carved one from Nóvgorod now in the Historical Museum at Moscow[\[131\]](#). Under the arches to his right is the 'Order of Choristers' (*kryloshan* for *kliroshan*), to his left that of 'Priests', next the 'Emperor Leo the Wise' and the 'Patriarch Tarasius' with an acolyte to bear his staff. Beyond Leo is the 'Empress Theophano' and two attendants, beyond Tarasius 'S. Andrew the Fool' and 'Epiphanius', and above, an account of his vision.

The icon is full of brilliant artistic merit both in drawing and style, though it is true that the figures are disproportionately tall. Special beauty is given to the icon by the bright and gay colours, almost such as we find in water-colours, standing out against a few patches of rich dark tones. The bright rich red (*bakán*) is the special note and the subtle shades of green (*prdzelen'*): However, the singular elegance of the whole is due to grafting the refined delicacy of the new Italian school upon the vigorous but harsh Byzantine stock. This blending of two elements, one essentially painting, the other sculpture, will be set forth in the next chapter.



101. *Mandylion or Holy Face, Novgorod,*
16th century. 129 x 92 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



102. *Saint Parasceve Piatnisa, Saint Gregory the Theologist, Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Basil the Great*, 16th century. Egg tempera on pine panel, 147 x 134 cm. E. Siline Collection, Moscow.

The Early 16th Century, Novgorod and Pskov

The impression made upon the whole of Europe by the Italian Renaissance in the sixteenth century survives to the present day in the French term for it, *le grand Art*. This expression fits the whole new system which made the State concern

itself with art. This manifested itself in the shape of magnificent buildings, sculptures, wall-paintings in churches and palaces and structures whose end was sheer decoration and pomp. But this great – or at any rate, ambitious – art broke down in Central Europe, which was not ready to accept or develop it. The taste for vast wall-paintings reached even Russia, but in the shape of a confused mass of iconographic subjects mixed with compositions transferred from the illuminated manuscripts to the wall. Still, the general movement in art, like a kind of fresh breeze, swept over eastern Europe and urged it on to the development of a new style of its own. Of course, this new style obeyed the laws of icon-painting and preferred to keep mostly to the fifteenth-century models, as being still entirely dedicated to the service of religion, while the sixteenth century introduced more subjects from the ancient world or decorative compositions. In general, icon-painters preferred the dignified Mantegna to the Milanese school. Thus the old connexions of Greek icon-painting with Venice and Padua were supplemented.

The general tendency was towards the development of tall and majestic figures for Christ, the Apostles and Prophets, towards the restoration of the ancient restfulness and towards an exaggeration of the tallness and slenderness of bodily proportions. The drawing of drapery kept to traditional contours but gave them no plastic modelling; a new technique ruled the parallel lines of the folds very lightly. It is the draughtsmen among the icon-workers who now come to the forefront (the technical word is *známenshchik*, from *známenif*, to make an original drawing as opposed to tracing); and this again means a change in the composition and placing of the figures. However, the drawing is not done from nature and therefore it is subject to the rule of the general type and remains characteristically iconic and the fundamental iconic type becomes that of conventional piety, a tall, bony, and ascetic figure. The new style of drawing is more correct and better managed, but it softens away the characteristic points of the different types and loses lively and effective touches. The general impression of deadness is increased by the many long vertical lines which run down the figures; the interruption in the folds made by the projection of the knees was a regular feature in Byzantine work, but now it almost disappears, the only transverse folds are at the shoulder in the himation and above the instep in the *chiton*.

The colours likewise suffered a considerable change. The dark tones largely give way to light; this is evidently under the influence of wall-painting. The ochre-coat is generally pale, the faces are yellowish, with highlights in white, often no *sankir* is used for the under-coat, and the shadows are hardly put in at all or only a little green where they should be deepest. The complementary, or

two-coloured reflexes, go right out of use with their employment of various shades of *prázelen*'. But the most important aspect of the colouring, as compared with that of the older schools, is the bright, patchy colouring of the clothes and the elaborate detail which is given to them. This practice appears in the Nóvgorod school of the late fifteenth and the early sixteenth centuries, again under the influence of the Italo-Cretan schools which in their turn were indebted for it to the Venetian painters: Jacobello del Fiore, Stefano da Zevio of Verona, Michele Lambertini, Michele Giambono, Catarino, Lorenzo Veneziano^[132]. Again, the Venetians right down to Crivelli and Jacopo Bellini had borrowed this bright and varied colour and elaboration of the costumes from the Flemings.

The bright colours are chosen with intent; red ochre, ultramarine, turquoise, different pinks, and suchlike; over everything, upon flower patterns, edgings, and highlights, is woven as it were a golden spider's web, executed with very fine brushes in liquid gold, and in the best icons, the Venetian manner is followed to perfection. The icon-painters delight especially in showing their skill in decorating the clothes of princes and nobles, in white chasubles with embroidered orphreys upon the shoulders, and in all kinds of brilliant ornamental patterns. This fashion goes back to the theatrical performances and tournaments at the courts of Ferrara and Mantua and the displays at Florence and Venice. Before treating the occurrence of these features in important examples, our description of the new colouring must be completed by some account of a new way of applying the colours, called the 'fused' manner (*Plav* from *plávif*, to melt or float). The 'fused' manner appears as early as the fourteenth century, but only in rare cases; it becomes more common towards the end of the fifteenth. Modern icon-painters reckon it a rarity in old work, and in modern times it is not common, being only practised by the most skilful craftsmen. The technique is to apply coats of paint so that the broad surfaces and even the small touches of highlight (*pzhívki* and *dvízhki*), and still more the areas of shadow, are, as it were, fused with each other, and the work when finished arrives at an enamelled surface like that which gives special elegance to the finish of certain masters of oil technique. Whether the 'fused' manner was intended to be imitation of this we do not know, but a tendency in this direction is observable during the fifteenth century. We have had occasion to point out a special manner of painting Christ's *himation* and the Virgin's cloak: the dark red or dark purple stuff shows no lights upon its folds, as if the painter made it his main object to paint a rich patch of one single tone, and feared lest putting in highlights should spoil the effect of his colour. Meanwhile the rest of the icon and the other figures in it have their highlights put in after the ordinary Greek manner. We see the same practice applied in particular places in the Italo-Cretan icons, in which

their skilful handling provides a contrast to the ordinary icons with their patchy highlights in the Greek manner. Naturally, when this fused manner is transferred from draperies to faces, the weakening of the highlights takes away their former bony dryness and asceticism, that is, it lessens their special character. But by the sixteenth century icon-painting was more occupied with producing a pleasant effect, was even aiming at prettiness, and cared less about the old emphasis upon character, so whole schools of craftsmen finished their course of instruction by acquiring the fused manner. The Greek way with exaggerated highlights was a sculptural way of doing things, however, this was more in the way of painting and probably required for execution more skill and exactness and accordingly, more time. The Greeks had a special term, *Glycasmós*, for the fused surface; Dionysius of Fourni^[133] tells us how to prepare the colour by taking two parts of flesh colour and one or less of ground colour, and then how to present flesh.

Rovinski declares that in the Nóvgorod school and the first Stróganov school (which we call the early Moscow school) big icons have the faces painted in the fused style, in *sankír* alone, almost without shadows or highlights. This is quite correct, and explains why modern icon-painters specially admire the fused style in old icons and add the note, 'the flesh colour was painted in smoke (*dýmom*)'. The fact is that the basic *sankir*, as has been said above, has a dark brown colour, and when diluted ochre is laid upon it very lightly and thinly, along the edges there is an undefined misty or smoky look which (perhaps through having heard the Italian painters' expression *sfumato*) they have compared to 'painting in smoke'. It must be remarked that, even when the face of the chief figure in an icon is painted in the fused manner, those of the subsidiary figures may have surfaces and patches of high light and yet be done by the hands of the same master or his pupils. In work on a small scale, the Greek technique with highlights was usually retained so as to preserve lively relief.

Altogether during this period there was a definite influence exercised by Western art upon the icon-painting of the Eastern or Greek world, and through it, on Russia icon-painting. But now, the models did not only come from Athos. The stream of influence ran much more strongly through the Italo-Cretan school and also by Moldavia and the Bukovina into Galicia and Volhynia.



103. Dionysius (Dionisii), *The Metropolitan Alexis Surrounded by Hagiographic Scenes*, end of the 15th century. Cathedral of the Dormition, Moscow.



104. *The Last Judgement*, 15th to 16th century.
Ukrainian National Museum, Lviv, Ukraine.



105. *The Tier of the Deisis, Christ in Glory*,
Novgorod, 16th century. 108 x 75 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



106. *The Miracle of Saint George Slaying the Dragon*,
end of the 15th century. 89 x 67 cm.
From the Village of Chenkoursk, Vologda region.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

At the end of the fifteenth century, with the rise at Padua of a great artistic studio under the famous Squarcione, teacher of the great Mantegna, we have a definite establishment of an exchange of iconographic compositions between East and West^[134].

We know further that Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary (*d.* 1490), employed at his court up to thirty of the best miniaturists of Florence and other

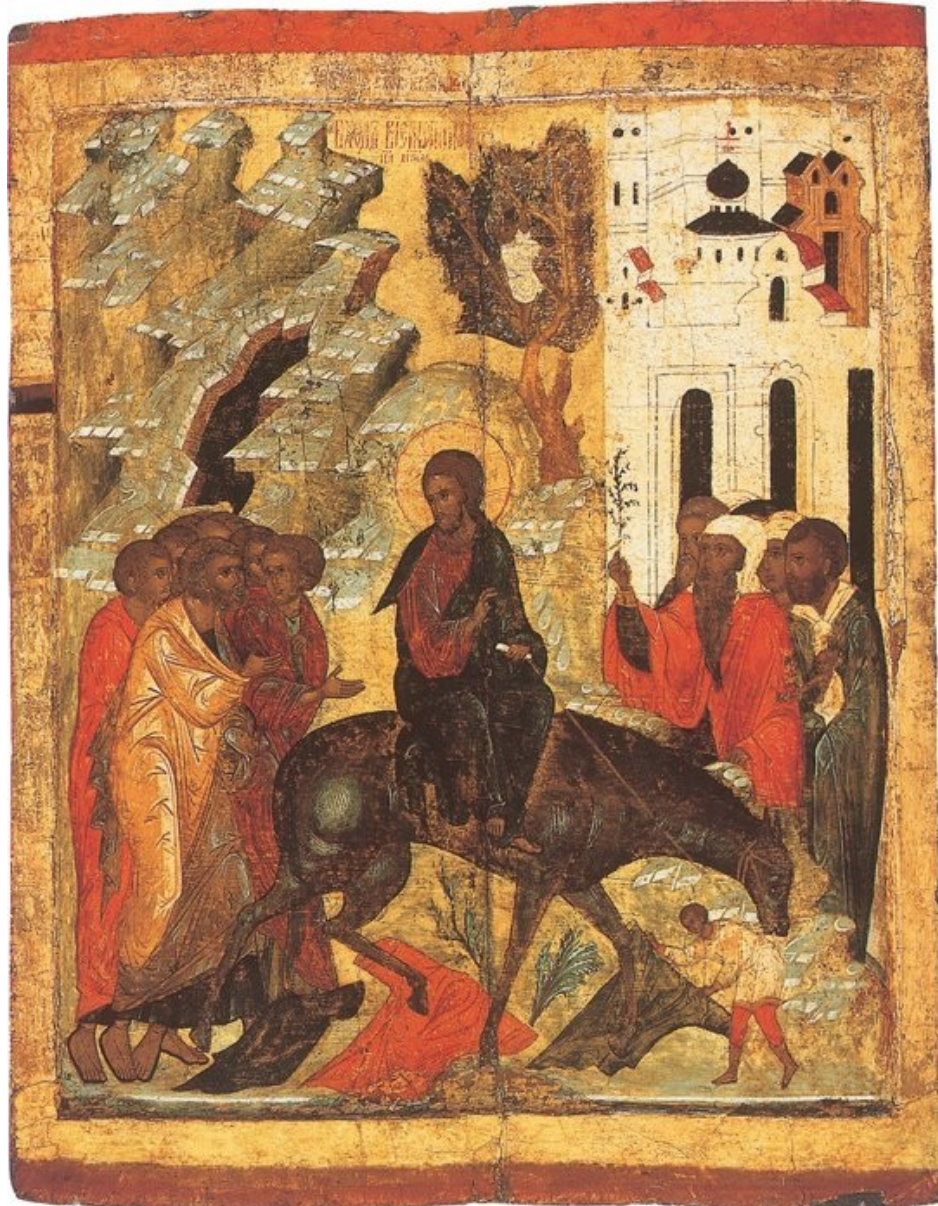
parts of Italy, and that when his rich library was captured by the Turks in 1526, its artistic treasures were scattered over the whole of eastern Europe. Only so can we account for finding in the Peresopnitsa Gospels a copy of Italian models^[135]. In the sixteenth century Moldavia had its guilds of wandering icon-painters who moved from place to place, painting the walls of churches, executing icons, compiling painters' guides with descriptions and outline models. Painters from Venice were invited to the court of the Hospodar of Moldavia in 1560.

The creative leader of Nóvgorod icon-painting at the beginning of the sixteenth century, according to recent writers, was 'the icon-painter Dionysius and his lads' (*ikónnik Dionísi so chády*) but as a matter of fact most of his work was done at Moscow. It is true that his first known work was for S. Paphnutius (d. 1479) at his monastery of Borovsk, about sixty miles south-west of Moscow. His colleague was the well-known Metrophanes, and the life of S. Paphnutius calls him 'a most famous icon-painter above the rest', but this is no reason for supposing that he must have belonged to the Nóvgorod school rather than to that of Súzdal'. In 1482 he was invited to Moscow with his fellows 'Pope Timothy, Yarets and Kon' to execute the iconostas of the Uspenski Cathedral and he did the work 'most marvellously'. In 1484 Dionysius, with his sons Theodosius and Vladimir, and Paisius the Elder^[136], 'cunning icon-painters' or, as it has been better said, 'painters of the life in the land of Russia, worked for a long time in the churches at Voloko-lamsk (a famous monastery sixty miles west-north-west of Moscow, founded in 1478). Our opinion is that the large number of icons put down to Dionysius is a reason for referring him to Suzdal', as a whole band of craftsmen would be required to execute them and this could well come from the Súzdal' district. By one means or another the fame of Dionysius passed from one abbot to another to the far north, and about 1500-2 he was working with his pupils in the monastery of S. Therapon (Ferapont), near the White Lake and the monastery of S. Cyril (350 miles north of Moscow, east of Petersburg). These monasteries, though in the Nóvgorod region, were founded by monks from monasteries in Moscow, and the zeal of Dionysius points to his connexions being with central Great Russia. As long as we have nothing of Dionysius but this Therapon wall-painting (all his other frescoes have either perished or have been unmercifully repainted, and his icons have not been cleaned or investigated), it must serve as the only basis for an estimate of his skill. We could have judged of his skill in icon-painting either by icons or by paintings in manuscripts which now were being executed by icon-painters, but we know of none from his hand, though miniatures by his son Theodosius do survive. The praises of Dionysius as a painter are given not to his fresco-work, but to his

masterly skill in drawing, 'in representing to the life'. The work at the Therapon monastery is of course the work of his school, not of the master himself; although it is even in quality and sure of itself, still it suffers from the general exaggeration of proportions, from mechanical execution and superficial character. No doubt it gives us a conscientious application of all the resources in use in painting of its time: polished plaster of admirable quality, airy backgrounds of light indigo, pigments of delicate tone, two-coloured reflexes, brocades with rich patterns, churches and architecture of complicated construction. We can see too that the greater part of the events of the Gospel history, the compositions illustrating the Akathist of the Virgin (the church was dedicated to her Nativity), and the figures of the saints were painted after the newest fashion, that is to say, that the regular schemes had been already worked out. This is why all the figures are so very 'iconic', and the general effect of the walls as painted is better than that of the separate parts; it gains by the uniform lightness and grace of the figures and the brightness and pleasantness of the colour scheme. Still, for all the best innovations introduced by Dionysius, he made no break with the old type of Russian painting, he only made it prettier. That is why there is no comparison between the Therapon frescoes and those by Giotto in the church of Madonna della Arena at Padua. The new manner may have utilised the attractive surface of the Italians, but it kept the fundamental scheme, with the Byzantine tradition, untouched, much as the two schools of Súzdal' and Nóvgorod had adopted it, one in a more elaborate, the other in a more simplified, form. A manner without highlights either in patches or on surfaces, with mere faint lines to indicate the contours of the folds, was fused in character and saved detail work in putting in the lights, but it did not become in its essence painting from the life: far from it, the iconic character became more marked than ever through the superficial treatment of definite features and relief.



107. *The Crucifixion*, c. 1500. Egg tempera on lime tree panel, 85 x 52 cm. From a monastery near Vologda. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



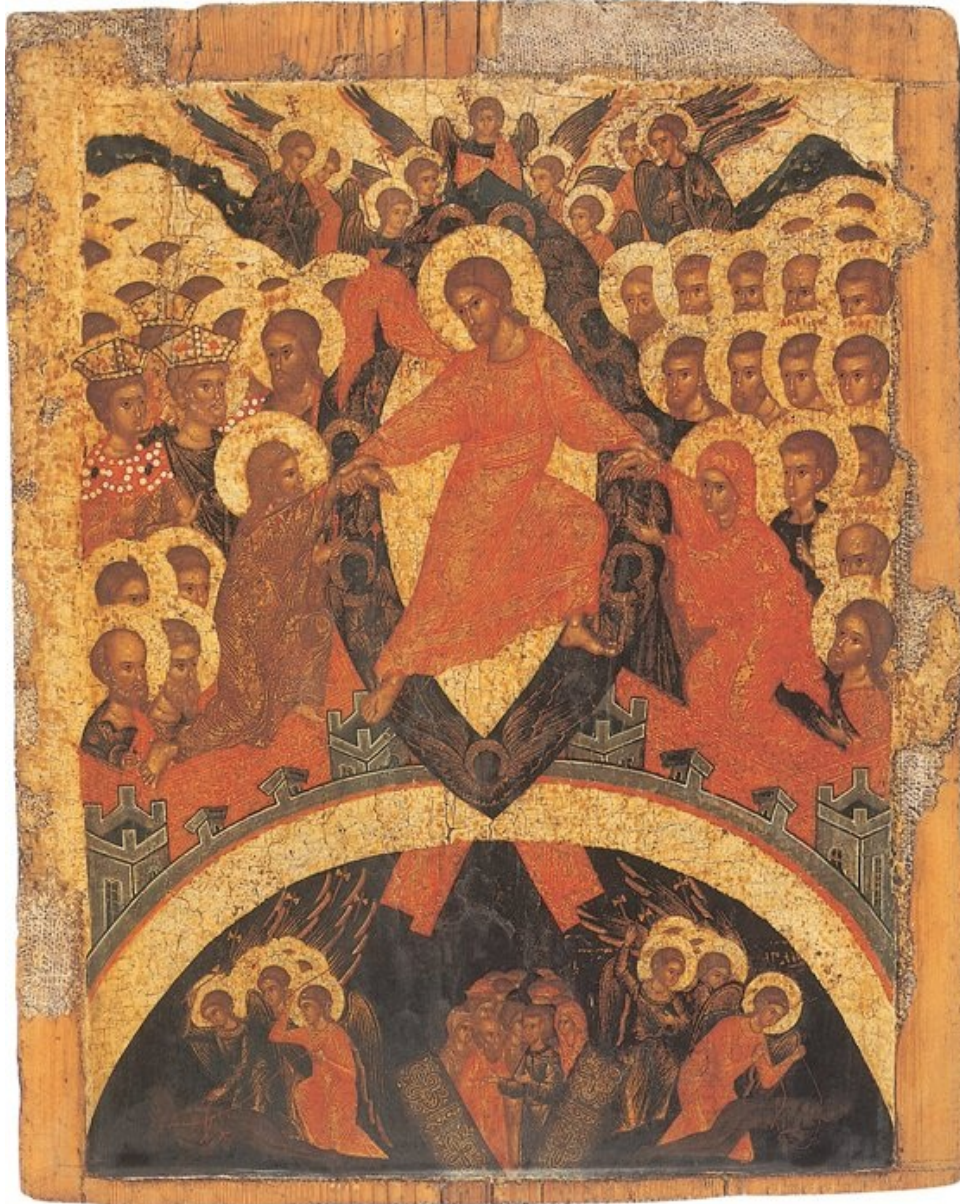
108. *The Entry into Jerusalem, Moscow*,
middle of the 16th century. 71 x 56 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

But the new styles at Nóvgorod and probably at Pskov, were evidently quite different in character and can be recognized not in wall-paintings but in icons. Indeed, from this time on, the iconic manner takes the lead and dominates wall-painting and ochre becomes the commonest colour. If then we confine ourselves to the icons, we may first take the various parts of a great icon of the *Last Judgement*, and the *Life of S. George* in the side scenes of a large icon of the

saint. The icons awake admiration by the beauty of their sky-blue grounds, the elegance of the patches of colour, and the brightness of the rich trappings. We have already observed that this brightness and patchiness appeared in eastern icons in imitation of western art, which emphasised the decorative element under the influence of decorative processions, triumphs, theatrical representations, and mystery plays[137]. This is the moment when, instead of the simple 'Apostolic' clothes, a chiton and himation, usually light blue and dark mauve, Angels and Arch-Angels are vested in magnificent albs and gold dalmatics, and Christ Himself is represented in splendid vestments with a tiara upon His head, whence arose in the east the symbolical figure of Christ the Great High Priest. This all worked in with the mystical literature of 'Visions of Paradise', such as are introduced, for instance, into the 'Life of S. Basil the New'[138], gates of the heavenly Jerusalem of bright crystal, beings like shining stars, youths clothed in fire, the white throne of God and round it youths vested in crimson, the mansions of the saints in various colours, full of flowers, with golden floors, emerald pillars to the halls, everywhere men in garments white as snow or pure as wool, their faces shining like the moon in the darkness of night. All this is apt to fall into absurdities, such as saints with their brows inscribed in letters of lightning, 'Prophet', 'humble in spirit', and sinners with their heads marked in red with the deeds of each 'Thief', 'Murderer', 'Adulterer', 'Sorcerer', and the like. This last detail answers to a new taste in icons for inscriptions in tiny letters giving the names of people or groups. The second icon, the *Life of S. George*[139], is remarkable for setting forth the doings of the chivalrous hero and martyr in the most dramatic way. He is portrayed as a tender youth, almost a boy, so as to make a more effective contrast with the rude barbarians his torturers. These the Nóvgorod painter has plentifully endowed with tall stature, wild faces, and savage gestures, and in them one may see types of the Nóvgorod democracy.

The icon of the *Six Days* it is both a splendid example of late fifteenth-century execution and interesting for the refashioning of old compositions and types. The scene of *Washing the Apostles' Feet* is characteristic in the iconographie exaggeration of pose and movement: Christ, for instance, is girt with one towel and holds another in His hands. So that He should not suffer the indignity of having to bend down to the Apostles' feet, they are arranged in two rows of six, one on a bench and the other as on the high step in a Russian bath. Thus, Christ can stand to wash S. Peter's feet, and the Apostle also stands up to show his submission to Christ's will, and points to his head asking Him to wash it so that he should 'have his part' with Him (John xiii. 8). The other Apostles are conversing in twos and threes, and the customary figure undoing his sandal is repeated. Christ's garment is of the colour called Venetian purple, the Apostles

also in chitons and himatia of various colours. The old Greek models are coloured in a new fashion, and the arrangement and the types are half Greek, half Italian.



109. Anastasis, *Pskov*, first half of the 16th century.
54 x 54 cm. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



110. *Saint Peter and Saint Nicholas*, 15th century.
From the Deisis of the Church in the village of Astafevo.
Museum of Fine Arts, Arkhangelsk, Russia.

To judge more clearly of the changes in style, let us take two versions of the *Entry into Jerusalem*, one in the State Russian Museum round about 1500, the other in the Ostroúkhov collection of the middle or even the end of the sixteenth century^[140]. A comparison of these shows, most palpably, how the master of the following generation has changed the old models and drawing. Very characteristic is the multiplication of mountains with 'heels' which in the hands

of the seventeenth century develops into a kind of grove of unknown coral growths or 'shrublets' (*kústiki*, as the icon-painters call them). But all the same all the figures are scrupulously retained with their attitudes, movements, and placing.

Nóvgorod icon-painting in the first half of the sixteenth century was flourishing, in spite of the anxious position of the city. One factor in this was the new custom and churches substituted for great schemes of frescoes and adornment with icons, beginning with the monumental iconostas of the principal church, then great icons which covered the piers of the nave and part of the aisle walls, and coming down to the small iconostases of the side-chapels. A new type of icon becomes dominant: great icons of Christ, the Virgin, the Saints and the Festivals, with scenes from their lives and actions. The best example of a church so adorned with precious icons is that of Ss. Peter and Paul on S. Sophia's Side at Nóvgorod^[141]. Icons of this sort require the development of a monumental style worthily to supply the great central figure, some saint highly esteemed at Nóvgorod, Ss. Nicholas of Myra, Theodore Stratelates, Philip the Apostle, Procopius, Barlaam Khutynski, James the Apostle, Andrew the Fool, Cyril of the White Lake or suchlike; at the same time the small scenes in compartments set round the main icon gave every opportunity for detailed work on a small scale, and this could be freer and more lively, representing miracles and martyrdoms and affording scope for dramatic treatment in imitation of western models. The so-called *fryaz*, or distinctly Frankish style, also arose in Nóvgorod, and an investigation of the Novgorod churches would throw much light on this special form of icon-painting and its unfamiliar themes.

Of course, not all the new forms and themes introduced at Nóvgorod could be satisfactory either in content or in artistic merit, and when the transfer to Moscow came, it meant a great loss of skill, as well as a purification. Take, for instance, the series of great icons of *Our Lord's Face*, beginning with the characteristic *Our Saviour of the Burning Eye* (*Yároe Oko*). The first model of this, a Rumanian fifteenth-century original, is now in the Uspenski Sobor at Moscow. Less characteristic is the early seventeenth-century version of *Our Saviour's Picture not made with hands* (*Vernicle*), painted for private use; most remarkable of these is the vernicle known as *Our Saviour of the Wet Beard*, because of the curious form of His pointed beard. Such an icon is splendidly effective in its place amid a tier of half-length Prophets and Patriarchs, but it produces a strange impression on a small scale in a museum. This copy, which has been restored, belongs to the sixteenth century.

The iconostas of Ss. Peter and Paul at Nóvgorod were restored after a fire in 1548. Some of the icons were fitted into it after having survived the fire, but the

greater part date from the middle of the sixteenth century, just the time when the Metropolitan Macarius moved the Novgorod workshops to Moscow^[142], and so it would be interesting to compare them with the icons of the Uspenski Sobor at Moscow dating from various years of the sixteenth century. However, the cleaning of its icons has only just begun, one only having been completed, and that not quite successfully, and in the Moscow church only two big icons have so far been touched and of these photographs are not yet available. Thus, full material for criticism is not accessible. However, the subjects and their general treatment have their own share of interest. As a matter of fact not all the icons in the Nóvgorod church have been actually repainted; some have been only covered with thick coats of olive oil which has hardened and darkened so that the colour is difficult to distinguish, but though it is difficult to see the drawing, something of its quality may be discerned; indeed, drawing and composition have very great merit and show that Nóvgorod followed the example of the early Súzdal' school, and superseded its first style of drawing, with its almost mechanical simplification by one of greater severity.

It is a satisfaction to be able to point in Nóvgorod to the appearance of icons in a ceremonial, almost a grandiose, style. Such is an icon of the chiefs of the Apostles, Ss. *Peter and Paul*, with writings in their hands (after the western model). A point to note is that both the faces have lost the Greco-Roman type and have become those of citizens of Nóvgorod, except that S. Peter retains the curly hair of the old type. But the general look of these two figures, strictly facing forwards, standing absolutely straight up from head to foot, with their apostolic vesture smoothed out and pleated in many tiny folds and swallow tails, is absolutely iconic. And, all the eighteen compartments with scenes from the lives of the two Apostles are in the same conventional iconic style.

More lively is an icon of *The Veneration of the Chains of the Holy Apostle Peter* showing a King, a Bishop, and other holy people adoring a set of fetters behind which is an icon showing S. Peter freed from prison. The background shows a church of fantastic architecture with a *Deesis* in its three front gables and a delightful bell turret above. Other churches of Nóvgorod have also preserved several precious icons with subsidiary scenes from the saints' lives.

Special mention is due to the very precious church of Ss. Boris and Gleb on the Trade Side on the bank of the Volkhov. It was the object of particular favour on the part of the princes of Nóvgorod and in it is collected a whole series of icons, some from the earliest and some from the most flourishing period of icon-painting. There is, for instance, in one chapel an icon of Ss. *Boris and Gleb*, a brilliant example of late fifteenth-or early sixteenth-century work. In the middle the two Saints are portrayed on horseback (like the other mounted saints, such as

Ss. Theodore Stratelates and Theodore the Tiro); this was the model for many splendid copies, such as the small icon of *Boris and Gleb* at the Rogozhski cemetery at Moscow. The artist must have made use of copies of Italian originals, so great is the resemblance to Benozzo Gozzoli's fresco in the chapel of the Palazzo Riccardi-Medici at Florence. The Princes' brocade cloaks and gaiters are lined with fur and embroidered with gold branches and flowers as on Venetian icons of the fifteenth century.

In the private collections of Moscow are several sixteenth-century icons with scenes round the edge: in the Ostroúkhov Collection^[143] is one of *S. John the Divine*, showing him on Patmos dictating to Prochorus, all round scenes from his life in the severest iconic style. Others are *Ss. Cyril of Jerusalem and Cyril of the White Lake*, the *Trinity* with a series of first-rate festivals, the *Assembly of S. Michael*, *S. George*, *Our Lord upon the Vernicle*, a *Panagiarion* with *Our Lady of the Sign* (fifteenth century), *S. Elias*, and many others. The Morózovs possessed wonderful icons of *S. Nicetas*, *S. Nicholas*, *Ss. Cyril and Athanasius*, the *Trinity*, a remarkable version of the *Last Judgement*, *In thee Rejoiceth*, the *Protection of Our Lady (Pokróv)*, and *Ss. Boris and Gleb* on foot. The Egórov Collection contains a series of 'fixed' Nóvgorod icons, *In thee Rejoiceth*, *The Unsleeping Eye*, and many small icons from Nóvgorod and Pskov and early Moscow copies after them.

Pskov began to develop its icon-painting later than Nóvgorod, apparently in the fifteenth century. In the late sixteenth it acquires a special decorative tinge, though this is scarcely recognised by the modern icon-painters. In the Pskov churches the icons are almost as impressive as those of Nóvgorod, indeed, owing to the absence of frescoes in every case but that of Christ on the Mirozh, almost more so. The source of Pskov icon-painting is to be sought in Nóvgorod, and it may be supposed that it was not till the end of the fifteenth century that the Pskov schools took a line of their own. But as in the sixteenth century Pskov had the quieter existence, these schools were naturally enabled to develop the common style further. The special point, as far as noticed hitherto, is a multiplication of the mere ornament, for instance dark draperies are relieved or lightened by running a brush full of liquid gold along the folds, garments are adorned with flower patterns, and buildings or even trees and plants feature gold decorations and leaves.



111. *The Tier of the Deisis, The Archangel Gabriel*,
Novgorod, 16th century. 109 x 38 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



112. *The Tier of the Deisis, The Archangel Michael*,
Novogorod, 16th century. 109 x 43 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery.



113. *The Tier of the Deisis, Saint John the Precursor*,
Novgorod, 16th century. 109 x 40 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



114. *The Tier of the Deisis, The Virgin*,
Novgorod, 16th century. 109 x 40 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



115. *The Tier of the Deisis, The Apostle Paul*,
Novgorod, 16th century. 109 x 40 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



116. *The Tier of the Deisis, The Apostle Peter*,
Novgorod, 16th century. 109 x 41 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



117. *Saint Nicholas of Myra*, beginning of the 16th century. Church of Saint Nicholas from the riverbank, Kiev.

How Pskov loved the ancient art of iconography is shown by the preservation of magnificent iconostases, often with all the metal repoussé work complete, with the donor's inscriptions and everything, also 'fixed' and votive icons about the walls, galleries, sanctuaries, and everywhere to a greater extent and in better preservation than at Nóvgorod. Finally, the icons at Pskov are in an incomparably better state, often they have not been repainted at all and, not

infrequently, icons may be seen with the original coat of olive oil varnish.

It is hardly possible to make a satisfactory comparison between Pskov and Nóvgorod, but one is tempted to compare them on general lines with Florence and Siena in the different directions that they took. Nóvgorod, like Florence, was specially inclined to wall-painting, whereas Pskov preferred icons, and nearly all its artistic life expressed itself in icons, either originals or copies.

This would lead to Pskov being decidedly more ready to submit to the influence of Italo-Cretan or even purely Italian models and accept their manner. In one of the churches of Pskov, in the apse, there hangs so exact a copy of a Venetian *Nativity*, of which an example is in the State Russian Museum, that, but for the Slavonic inscription, one would have to class it as Greek. But this could not really be so, because an icon-painter in making a copy always does it in his own proper manner, and does not set out to come quite close to the original as does an ordinary copyist. Not only this, but the Pskov icon-painter feels himself freer in the matter of composition and allows himself more licence: Pskov did not begin by being so subject to the Greeks and so was more ready to accept the Western influence. Pskov icon-painters were fond, as we have said, of *inokóp'*, livening up colour with gold hatching: they liked bright, startling colours and the Frankish style (*fryaz'*), a free and careless style of drawing for the sake of its lively effect, that we can call dramatic expressiveness^[144]. In the Pskov school, the votive icon was the chief favourite, for it dated from the time when the school was young. Together with that of Nóvgorod, it was the parent of the schools of Moscow, Tver', and the Rostov and Yaroslavl' region.

Such are all the hypotheses that we can venture to put forward, for exact data is not within our reach. In questions such as those touching the independence of schools, and the special criteria by which they may be distinguished, it is not safe to be guided even by icons remaining in the churches. How can we be certain that the iconostas of a Pskov church were not entrusted to a Nóvgorod studio? Examining the different icons in the churches of Pskov, in the State Russian Museum, and in private collections, to look for special criteria seems to us quite useless: any special features are infinitely likely to have been transferred to the Moscow schools, where we should find them again.

Much the same is true of the whole class of so-called *Stróganov styles*, which take their rise somewhere in the middle of the sixteenth century, and those assigned to Ustyúg and Vólogda. We know the lively commercial activity of Vologda, Ustyug, and in general the north of Russia up towards the White Sea: likewise the enormous part played in these northern regions by the monasteries and smaller religious houses or cells, their economic and educative importance. Still, favourable material conditions do not at once establish the existence of art,

or even of artistic handicraft, and the orders given by the Stróganovs, many as they may have been and regular, may quite well have gone to Nóvgorod and Pskov, and there is no reason to place the early Stróganov icons to an independent school[\[145\]](#).

The 16th Century, Moscow

In Moscow, icon-painting arose under what ought to have been the best conditions and auspices. To begin with, it derived from the Súzdal' school, which for the early period stood highest in artistic skill, traditions and aims. Later on, when icon-painting in Russia began to truly flourish, Moscow benefited from having the best men, and the best models, from the developed schools of Nóvgorod and Pskov. Finally, in the middle of the sixteenth century, it was entrusted with the immense task of decorating churches and monasteries with icons, and enjoyed the direct protection of the Moscow Tsars, all the great people of the realm, the commercial class and even the country folk. Everywhere icons were in favour and the art encouraged with commissions, searches for ancient models by the best masters, and general interest in its welfare.

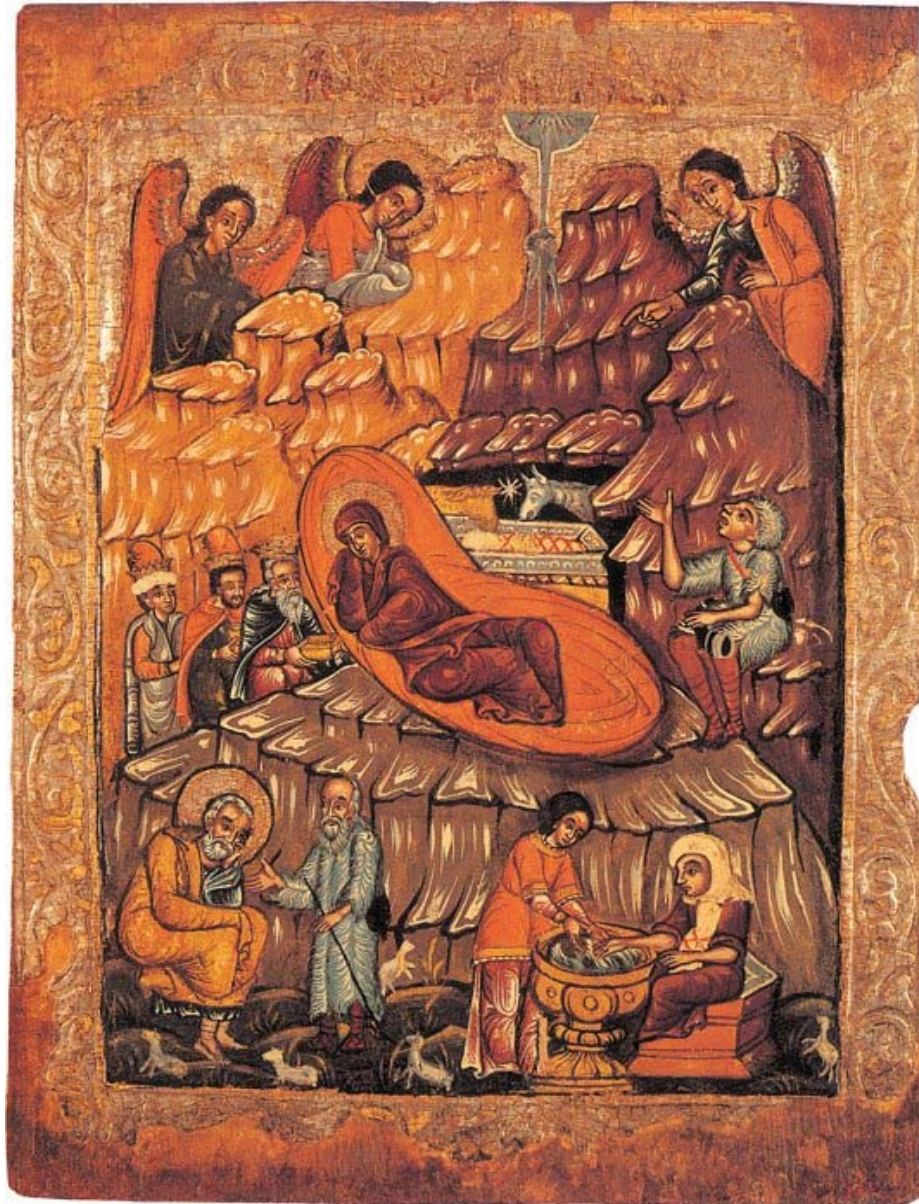
The historical process by which the whole Russian land was being grouped round Moscow had become evident in the fourteenth century, proceeded apace in the fifteenth, and for Great Russia was consummated in the sixteenth. This political centralisation brought with it a centralisation of social and religious life, learning, and art. In accordance with this tendency, Macarius, at first Archbishop of Nóvgorod and then Metropolitan of Moscow, transferred to Moscow the icon shops of Pskov and Nóvgorod together with the trained book scribes. One aspect of the official interest in correcting service books and church ordinances showed itself in a search for Greek books and Greek models for icons, and a general attempt to improve the standard of icon-painting[\[146\]](#).

Moscow rose to greatness because of its position as a commercial centre, at the point where the route from the East by the Volga and the Súzdal' district to the west, Galicia and Volhynia, crossed the old Varyag route from the Baltic to the Black Sea. As the centre round which the Russian land was gathering it demanded the attention of the government. Its first bishops in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Peter (1308), Theognostus (1327), Alexis (1353), and Photius (1408), were either icon-painters themselves or brought others with them and filled the Moscow churches with holy things. But in 1392 Tokhtamysh the Tartar burnt Moscow and all its churches, and a great rebuilding began in 1396. The Greek Theophanes worked at the wall-paintings: he astonished the Russians by

working from memory without anything to copy. He did the Archangel Cathedral, and worked with Andreï Rublëv in 1405 in the Cathedral of the Annunciation, and so for twenty years. Still, regular plans for building a permanent and splendid Kremlin, with cathedrals and palaces were only taken in hand in the second half of the fifteenth century and reached some completion by the end: the Uspenski Sobor was built in 1479, in 1485 that of the Annunciation was rebuilt, in 1483 the great Chúdov monastery[\[147\]](#), in 1491 the cathedral of Our Saviour's New Monastery (Novospasski), in 1505 the Archangel Cathedral, and so on. Nevertheless, the interior decoration of these churches had either decayed by the middle of the sixteenth century or was by then thought unworthy; accordingly wall-paintings and icons were all renewed, except a few icons of ancient veneration, either left in place or preserved in apses or chapels against the walls. The attention paid by the State to the principal churches and their decoration led as early as 1547 to the establishment of schools for icon-painters, of course, in the practical form of work-shops with salaried craftsmen who also executed commissions given by the Tsar. To these were added the *Icon-chambers* (*Ikónnÿya Paláty*), much like what the Italians call *l'Opera del Duomo*), in which models were collected and icons painted for the cathedrals and oratories; afterwards came the special *Craftsmen's Chamber*, working solely for those 'above', *i.e.* the Tsar's family; and finally a special department attached to the Armoury (*Oruzhéynaya Paláta*) and looking after the Moscow cathedrals. Detailed for this work were not only icon-painters, but also clerks and business men from the department. Of course these might be enthusiasts for icons, or they might be mere officials quite uninterested in the work and taking up a merely formal attitude in giving commissions for icons or passing them on completion. This change of system changed the outlook of the painters themselves; it was no use expecting any great artistic upward movement, any new inventions or special advances. Commissions were executed to meet the ordinary taste and nothing more, by aiming at mere attractiveness and the easy approval of detailed work. The way to rise to the status of salaried icon-painter to the Tsar was no doubt made easier by the repute gained through work for the Stróganovs and suchlike, but in general ancient Russia reckoned only wall-painting as an art and put down the painting of icons as a mere craft, because they had always been produced to be put in ordinary houses and cottages and were sold in shops and by pedlars along with various stuff for the household.



118. *Myrrh Bearers*, Novgorod, 16th century.
103 x 78 cm. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



119. *The Nativity of Christ*, middle of the 16th century.
National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kiev.

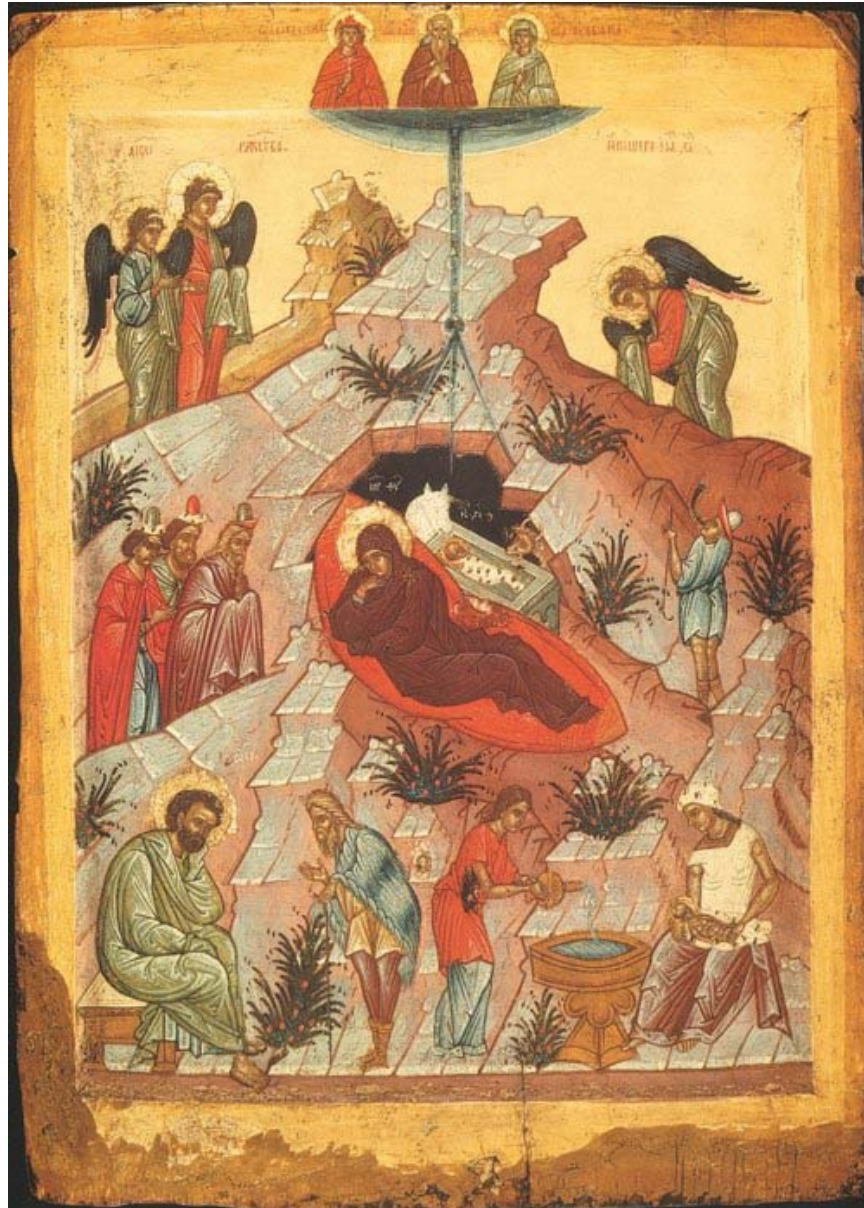
The measures taken by the Tsars and the increase in the number of painters^[148] ought to have brought to light a greater number of talented men devoting their lives to the work and accordingly creative power ought to have increased. As a matter of fact, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, we do get a considerable list of names more or less famous for icon painting: Medovártsev the gold-painter (*Illustrated Gospels*, A. D. 1528, Public Library, Petersburg), Dermoyártsev from Nóvgorod with his sons, Alexis Mály of Pskov

(*Dormition*, in the Cave Lavra, 1521), Simeon the Metropolitan (1514), Andrew the Protopope (known about 1535), Ostánya, James, Michael, and others at work on the icons of the cathedral of the Annunciation (1554). A still fuller list exists of icon-painters of the seventeenth century, among them many who worked for the Stróganovs at the close of the sixteenth: Stephen Ref'ev or Arefiev, the Borozdins, the Pérshkins, Sávin, Kostromítinov, the Chírins, Bezmin, Ushakóv, Saltánov, Ryazánets, Apóstol-Yúr'ev, Ulánov, Poznánski, and many others[149]. All the same, in our analysis, comparatively poor as it is in information and especially materials upon which to go, will be able to prove that, in this extensive array of names, there are no cases of independent personal creativeness to bring the mechanism of icon-painting personal artistic and religious feeling; there is no application of talent and toil to make a real change in design, types, and expression, and so create a new model with a character of its own. This we did find in Andreï Rublëv, but in the Nóvgorod school we could point to nothing to equal his works. Something similar, but only in the department of expression we shall find in Procopius Chírin and some of the Stróganov masters: new types we shall see in dealing with Simon Ushakóv and his pupils, but these are merely in a foreign shape, borrowed from the west.

And so the history of Moscow icon-painting, in comparison with the early schools of Súzdal' and Nóvgorod, seems to show us a sort of slackening in personal creativeness; and all the icon-painters I have enumerated turn out to be merely good craftsmen, with the possible exception of Simon Ushakóv, whom at any rate his own time regarded as an independent artist, though by no means all connoisseurs of icons accept this view. It is not without good reason that nowadays icon-painters still put Andreï Rublëv at the head of their art, and modern writers upon the subject, Murátov, Shchépkin and others are almost agreed in regarding the Nóvgorod epoch as the highest and putting the artistic importance of the Moscow school lower: they see in it merely an exaggeration of the 'prayerful element', by which they mean the religious or ritual side; they describe the impression of the Moscow icons as 'workaday', because of their 'dull' colours, the loss of 'perfect build' (*stróynost'*) in the figures and of 'the former idealistic inspiration'. Against this general verdict the same observers allow the royal icon-painters a certain beauty in the reds and blues, a pleasant folk-character in the buildings and types, and a technically perfect execution[150].

As early as 1551, when the workshops were just beginning, one by one, to move to Moscow, the Council of the Hundred Chapters (*Stogláv*) published a series of general regulations dealing with icon-painting. These regulations required that the craftsmen '*should be humble and mild men, not given to vain*

words, living piously, not indulging in quarrels, no drunkards, keeping their souls pure, and living under the supervision of their spiritual guides. Then the Tsar would favour such icon-painters, and the bishops would honour them above the common people.' Accordingly, the craftsmen had to deal with their apprentices. The bishops were to take notice of the progress of the apprentices and distinguish by their attention those who were diligent and pious. Otherwise the bishop would inhibit both master and apprentices. The bishop was also directed to inhibit all craftsmen who should paint 'without being instructed, by their own will', or 'not after the pattern' and sell icons so painted to the people: he was not to accept any excuse 'of how they got their living by this craft'. In general, the bishop was to keep careful watch to see that the painters copied ancient models and did not 'paint the Deity out of their own invention'. All these rules and prescriptions had, fortunately, not the slightest effect, either good or bad. The orthodox clergy in the Russian Church showed itself as little concerned with icon-painting as the Greek[\[151\]](#); no censorship was established nor any supervision, and the dealings between Church and craft were, as ever, a matter of commercial agreement.



120. *The Nativity of Christ*, first half of 15th century.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



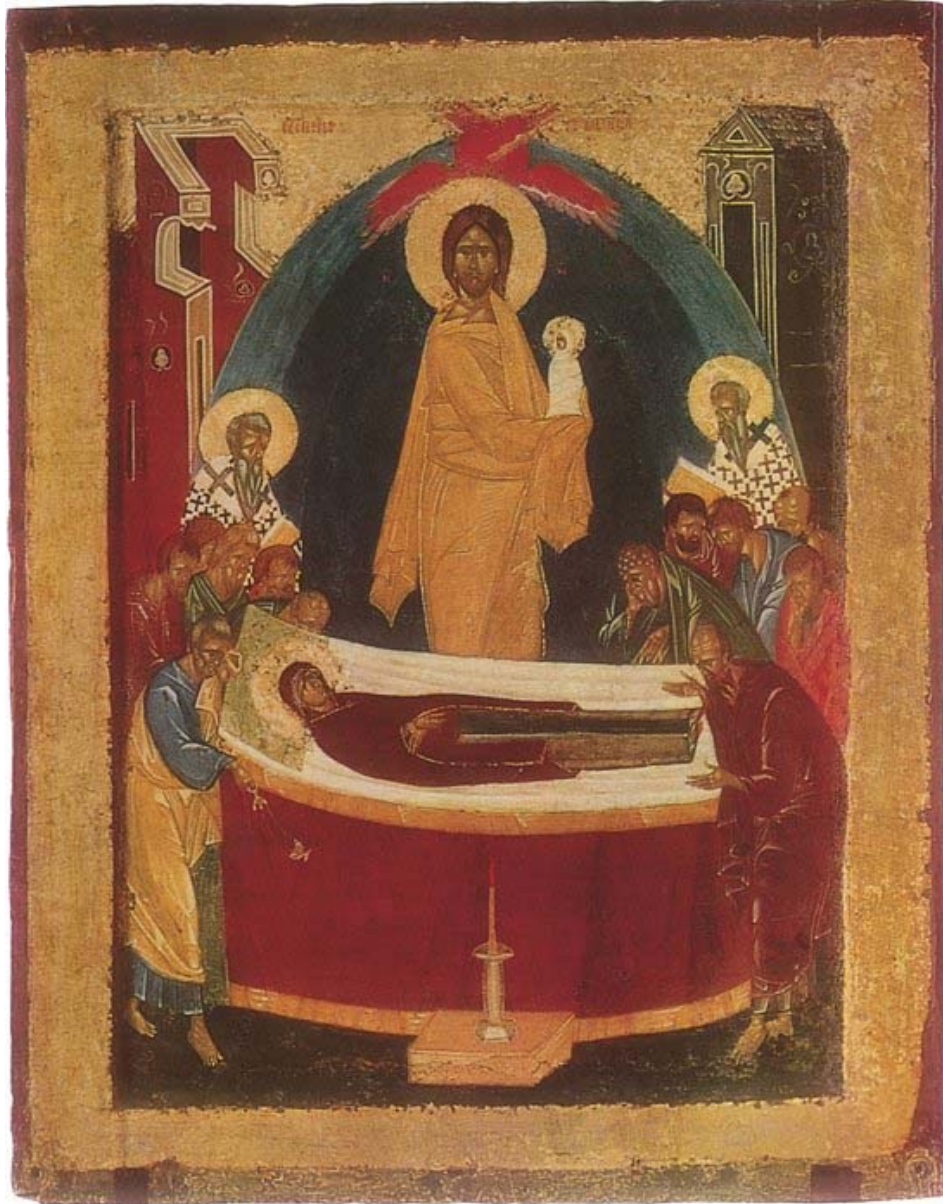
121. *The Dormition*, Pskov, first half of 16th century.
113 x 81cm. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

The Muscovite Tsars, having united the Russian land and the Russian people, gradually came to look on all Russia as their private estate and tried to administer it as such by the offices (*prikázy*) fixed at Moscow, and also by their own workshops for the advantage of their fisc and royal business[\[152\]](#). Icon-painters were first summoned to Moscow as a temporary and extraordinary measure, to take their share in the unprecedented activity in building and decorating the cathedrals and churches by the palace. However, other needs

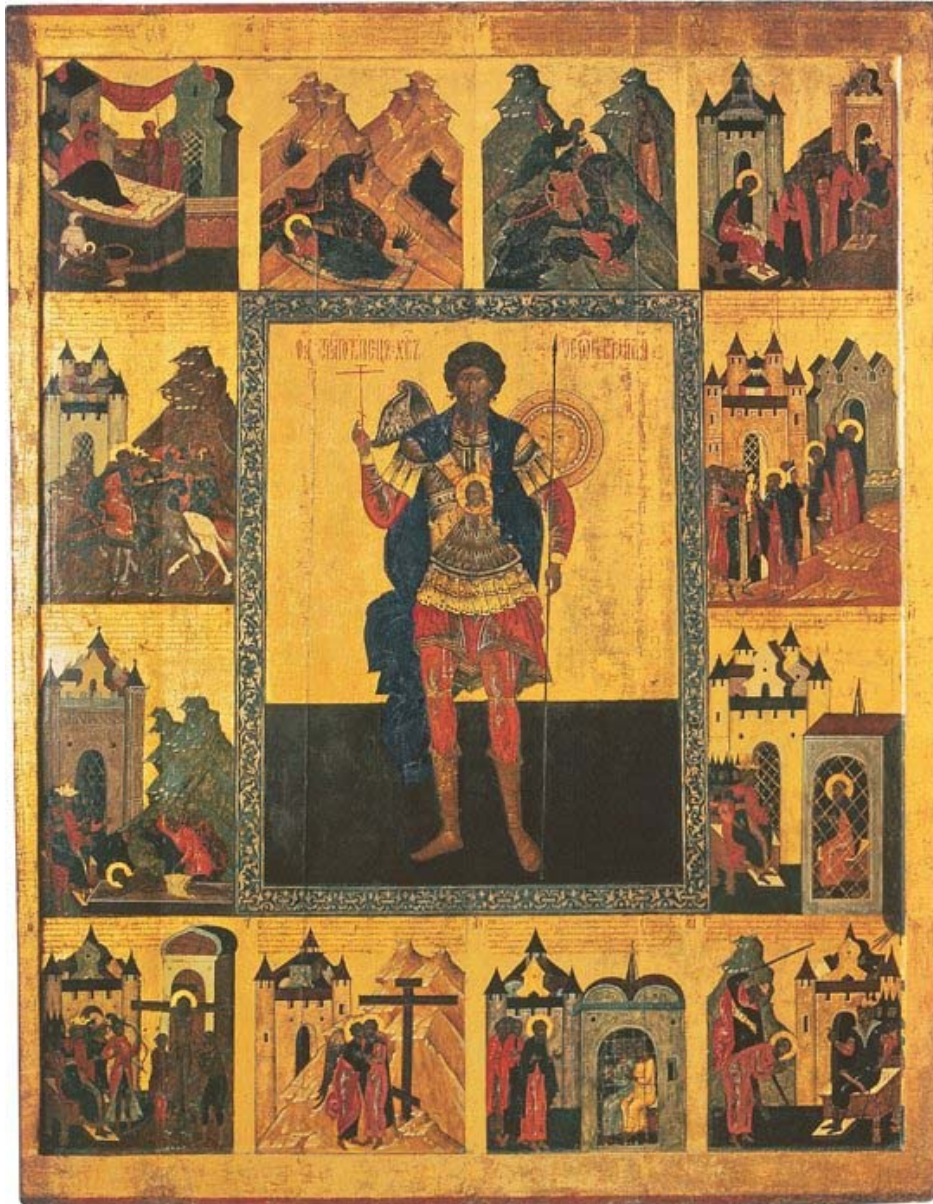
arose and the matter became customary, and such special summonses were still the only way of getting the Sovereign's icon-work done right down to the time of Boris Godunov^[153]. But this method was inconvenient and uneconomical: the icon-painters were apt to be away on some one else's job and could not come within the required time, or avoided the summons and declined the work. Gradually the Sovereign's icon-work grew to a department attached to the Moscow offices, but, despite this arrangement, was badly organised. The "Troublous Times" were approaching, and with them, the complete ruin of the economic and political administration in Moscow. When it became possible to set about putting the Kremlin and its cathedrals in order after the Polish sack, it was found that no provision had been made for setting the icons right, although a great deal had been saved, *e.g.* icons carried away before hand and kept. As a temporary arrangement, in 1613-14 the icon-work was attached to the Armoury, but because of the importance of ecclesiastical affairs under Alexêy Mikhailovich, matters concerning icons went through the office of Private Affairs. The Icon Chamber included a few of the best craftsmen, as counsellors, experts, and supervisors. But the pay of craftsmen and apprentices was either extremely low or took the form of special rewards in answer to definite claims, so that the craftsmen had to secure their own living by working on the side. The 'salaried' icon-painters rarely received as much as thirty roubles a year, and so the records of the chamber are full of the tearful petitions of the painters. Besides the salary, there was an allowance in kind, but this was nothing much, sometimes there is no clothing allowed, sometimes no food or no money. Naturally, they all took to making endless petitions, but it certainly seems as if this was due to complete neglect of them on the part of the office, even in the case of the very distinguished painters such as Simon Ushakov; besides, it was largely a case of the ordinary official procrastination. Of course the painters worked for other employers but they were continually dragged back to work for the Tsar. They had to pass the work of impressed craftsmen, drew the designs for them to paint, looked after the progress of work, repaired the icons in the cathedrals and palace-churches and chapels, gave opinions, drew up estimates for painting, and saw to the acknowledgement of materials received for new undertakings. However, the Sovereign's work suffered from the same official delay and was always in arrears, always had to be done in a hurry by a certain date.

The lot of icon-painters in Russia was hard. The wall-paintings in Moscow began to darken from the soot of candles and incense, and from the dampness of the churches which were never properly warmed; they split off and fell down, and suffered to such an extent that they were often being repainted, and for this

the craftsmen were summoned from all parts according to the governors' lists, back from their towns and monasteries and from work for private patrons. Draughtsmen and face-painters, even restorers, were required, and the governors when they had found these craftsmen, without any delay in accordance with the Tsar's strict command and sent them to Moscow where they were assigned to their work, without any attention paid to their necessities, excuses or prayers to be let off. What happened, and it often happened, was that on his arrival in Moscow, some icon-painter 'from among the orphans of Yaroslávl', for long, for months together, remained in the bazar in his cart with nowhere to stow his children, no home at all. For this reason the city icon-painters generally shied away from the summons, or, if they were cornered by the police, afterwards ran away.



122. Theophanes the Greek, *The Dormition*, late 14th century.
Egg tempera on lime tree panel, 86 x 68 cm.
Museum of History of Moscow, Moscow.



123. *Saint Theodore Stratelates*, 1570.
Pskov, Parish Church, Kalbensteinberg, Germany.

The result was that Moscow, during all the time when it was the seat of the Tsars, failed to give Russian icon-painting and its craftsmen the help they required to reach artistic creativeness. Far from it, in consequence of the carelessness and indifference that reigned in the higher circles, it made the worst possible use of an artistic craft which had succeeded in growing up upon Russian soil, depriving it even of liberty in its activity and reducing to nothing its achievements and material prosperity.

All the same, there was a lively interest in icons and this is shown by the stores of wonderful icons, going back to the fourteenth century, preserved in the Moscow churches. In the Uspenski Sobor there is a whole series from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and then a complete tier of monumental icons of the sixteenth. Unluckily, they were, in the seventeenth, put into solid repoussé *rízy* of silver-gilt and unmercifully repainted. In 1916, two big icons of *S. Peter* and *S. Alexis*, Metropolitans of Moscow, were uncovered and show clearly that if the icons of the whole tier were laid bare with equal skill and judgement, Moscow would be in possession of a wonderful collection of artistic examples[\[154\]](#). Even richer is the cathedral of the Annunciation, though the icons do not go back beyond the fifteenth century. Besides the chief iconostas with *Our Lady of the Don* and others, and the chapels on the ground floor, in each of the domes is a chapel with a complete iconostas of the first half of the sixteenth century, with mouldings and frames of exquisite enamel work. The icons are particularly attractive for their ‘fused’ painting, and tender religious types, chosen for the Tsaritsas and their daughters. In the Archangel Cathedral are the icons dedicated in memory of the Tsars from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, who are buried in this location. In the little cathedral of Our Saviour in the Pine-wood, the iconostas preserves the precious fixed icon of the *Transfiguration* by Rublëv, an ancient copy of *Our Lady of Bogolyúbovo*, and others. The church of the Twelve Apostles in the Kremlin has both Greek icons of the fifteenth century and fine Russian ones of the seventeenth. Other monasteries, Chúdov in the Kremlin, Andrónikov, Símonov, Donskóy, Novospásski, Novodêvichi (New Nunnery), Srêtenski (Meeting of Our Lady of Vladimir), Ivanovski, Voznesénski Dêvichi (Ascension Nunnery), contain icons valuable either for their antiquity or their style. So too, do many churches, particularly those of Our Lady’s Conception, Our Lady of Georgia, Our Lady of Vladimir, and Our Lady of Kazán’. Each has one or more ancient icons and among them the best models for all the Festivals, all the important types of Christ, and of the Virgin, and one may say the great majority of the saints of the Orthodox Church. If all these old icons were cleaned Moscow would have a complete set of subjects, and the art of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would be able to show that it did accomplish a great deal, even more than there is in Nóvgorod and Pskov. Finally, to pass a considered judgement on the level attained by the icons of Moscow itself, we ought to survey the stores of icons in the iconostases and against the walls of the churches of the Rogozhski cemetery of the Old Believers, the Transfiguration cemetery of the Dissenters who reject the priesthood, and the Nicholas monastery of the Old Believers who made their peace with the State Church (*Edinovêrtsy*). All these are great museums of icons

collected with loving care by the Old Believers at a time when old icons had temporarily lost their value in the eyes of Russian society and the Government.

The accumulation of ancient icons in Moscow ought to have answered to, it similar richness paintings on the walls of churches, but fate which has visited them with frequent fires. Still more, the indifference towards monuments of antiquity which continued throughout the eighteenth and half the nineteenth centuries has left little of the fifteenth-or even sixteenth-century frescoes. Only now, and in miserable fragments, are we succeeding in uncovering the paintings of the chief cathedrals, however, it is absolutely necessary to adduce their evidence in any attempt to ascertain the stylistic character of Moscow icon-painting.

A fresco surviving from a series painted in 1514-19 in the chapel of the Praise of Our Lady in the Uspenski Sobor was successfully uncovered in 1913. Its general effect naturally recalls those of the Therapon monastery, but this fresco is not only incomparably superior, it belongs to quite a different manner, going back to an entirely separate origin which we put down to the old Súzdal' style of Rublëv's time, the beginning of the fifteenth century. It is probably due to the influence of Italo-Cretan models. The Italo-Cretan masters had sought to create something to take the place of the ordinary Byzantine *Nativity of Our Lord*, something which should remain within the Greek formula yet answer to the western themes, *Adoration of the Shepherds*, and particularly *Mary and Joseph adoring the Child*. The result was that we now have the choice of a composition so complicated that the *Nativity* is widened into the theme of *The Praises of the Blessed Virgin*. The ordinary *Nativity* had added to it the Adoration of the Magi and the Adoration of the Shepherds, and, further, the Grotto of the Nativity with the Manger is with the blue circle of heavenly cloud or glory, within which the Blessed Virgin sits in state, the Queen of Heaven, on a great carved throne with a round back, holding before her the Child who is giving the blessing with His right hand and holding a scroll in His left.

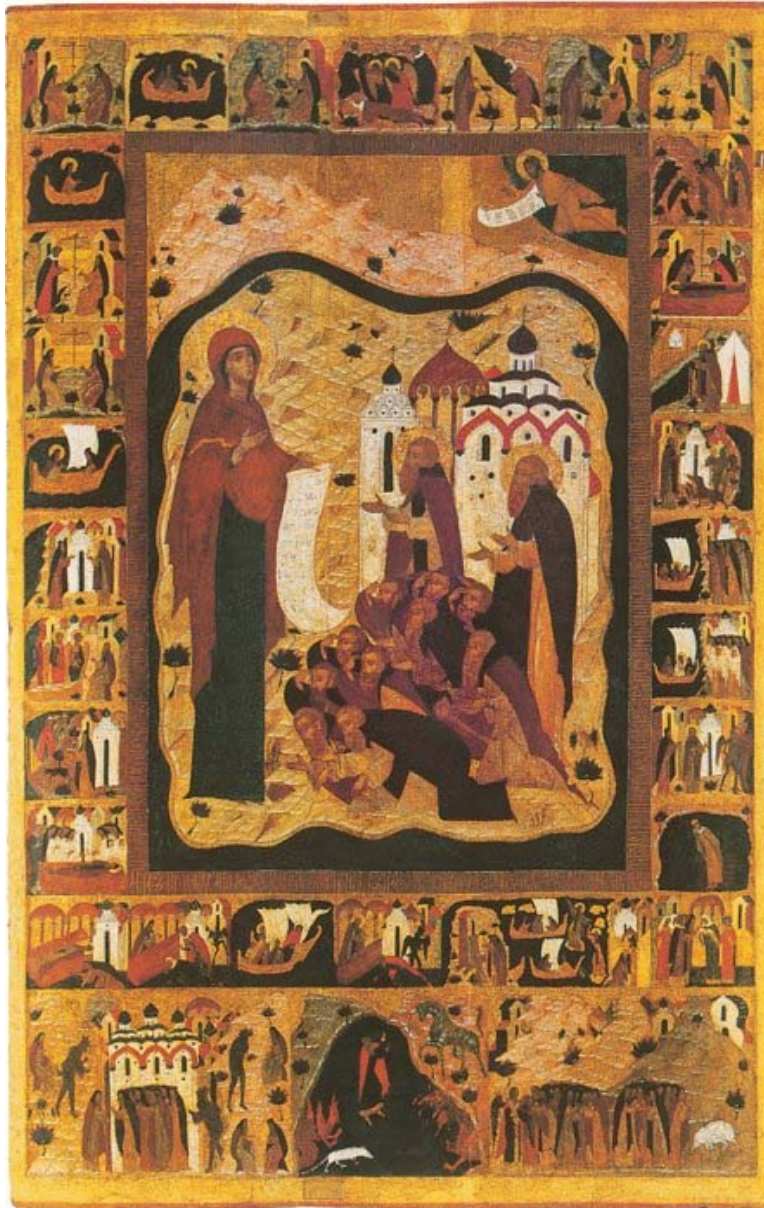
Of course this theme is far from new, it had appeared in the fifteenth century, but the style is quite new. It might be the personal manner of Theodosius, son of Dionysius, though it certainly has points of resemblance to that of Rublëv, this can be readily seen by comparing the figures of Magi and Angels with the icon of the *Transfiguration* ascribed to Rublëv. Against the Therapon frescoes the movements are less violent, the folds softer, the smoky blue tones of the cloak worn by the Angel of the Holy Night, the pinkish-mauve cloak of the Dawn Angel, and the shine upon the pinky-buff hills standing out against the deep indigo of the night sky—all this is similar in conception to the Italo-Cretan icon in the State Russian Museum, and far surpasses the commonplace themes of

Therapon.

An example important for our historical guidance could be the remains of frescoes executed in the cathedral of the Annunciation after its rebuilding in 1489 and uncovered in 1882 by the painter V. D. Fártusov. However, an unfortunate mistake covered up and possibly destroyed these remains. What happened was that the committee of experts who were commissioned to oversee the uncovering of the partly exposed frescoes suspected Fartusov of having in too great zeal supplied something of his own. The fact is that the committee expected to find the Russo-Byzantine style, and was confronted with almost Italian painting. To get rid of the suspicions abroad, and to make a complete painting over the spaces where only bits of frescoes and stray figures were left, they entrusted to the icon-painter Safónov of Mstëra the task of filling the gaps with new work in the Russian iconic style. Safónov, to simplify the job, just repainted the whole in the modern Mstëra style such as was used by his journeymen. Luckily Fartusov himself had kept a series of big photographs which allow us more or less to judge of the originals[\[155\]](#). Among the frescoes was one large one, *In thee Rejoiceth*, the rest are small fields containing scenes from the Gospels (but not the regular Festivals) and figures of Saints. The composition has already made a change in the hills and buildings. Instead of the shaly mountains of Greece we have Italian hills with towers in the Renaissance style, and again the figures do no more than distantly recall the Greek types; everything is changed, types, clothes, and expression. We see heads lively and naturalistic, full beards right round, and bald crowns (not allowed in icon-painting). It is true that occasionally the type seems absolutely that of the nineteenth-century academic style; perhaps the photographs were retouched, or the frescoes were supplemented, to make them clearer. The figures are slender, light and graceful even in the case of old men; they have no bones. Rather, they have narrow shoulders and small hands and feet, but the proportions are not as long as in the work of Dionysius. It is the clothes that specially mark the style. They are still chiton and himation, but they are worn like capes after the western fashion and are fastened with brooches on the breast. The folds are very fine and close like those of silk and cover the whole body: they allow the projection of the knee and shin. Finally the fresco *In thee Rejoiceth* offers many novelties in the types.



124. Praise of the Virgin with Scenes
from the Akathist Hymn, 14th century.
Cathedral of the Dormition, Moscow.



125. *Our Lady of Bogoljubovo with Saint Zocime and Saint Savvatii and Scenes from Their Lives*, From the Solovki Monastery, 1545.
The Moscow Kremlin Museum, Moscow.

When we turn to the subjects represented in Moscow icons, we must note the extreme interest shown by society, the painters and even by the clergy and with it, a certain attraction towards the western source of enlightenment. At the same time, there is a strange mingling of worldly and churchy subjects even in the wall-paintings of the palace chambers. In 1553 the Golden Chamber in the Palace was frescoed and Simon Ushakov, on the occasion of a restoration,

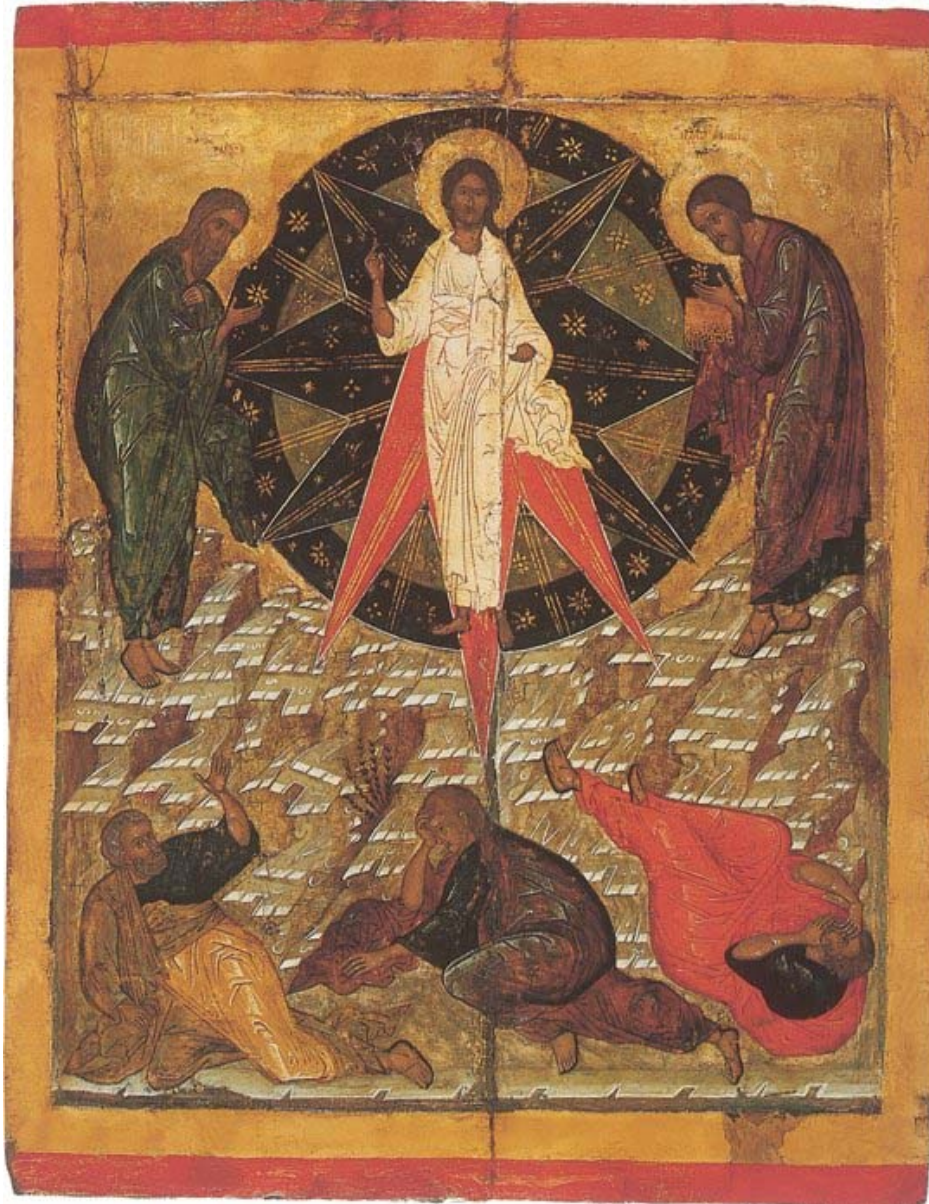
repainted it in 1672. These were the subjects and divisions of the painting on walls and vaults. In the middle was portrayed Jesus Christ as *Emmanuel* 'within the arches of heaven' with the chalice in His hand, round Him the emblems of the *Four Evangelists*. Below are represented the gates of Heaven with an Angel in them and underneath them a man with a staff in his hand. Then comes a circle with the Sun, and then the wide gates of Hell, upon the gates of Heaven were Chastity, Reason, Purity, and Right; on those leading to Hell, Lechery, Unreason, Wrong, and Uncleaness. Then appears the circle of the Earth with waters, winds, *etc.* Following is the fiery circle of the Sun and the circle of the Moon, the Air in the shape of a Maiden, the circle of Time winged with the four seasons: the circle of the Creation; the Year in the form of a Man: Death with a trumpet in his hands; in a circle the subject from Proverbs, *Wisdom hath builded her House*; the Angels of the Seven Churches; the Sacrifice of Gideon; the Parable of the Sower, *i.e.* Jesus Christ upon a throne, before Him, people, birds pecking at seeds, a very literal illustration; Barlaam conversing with Joasaph the king's son; the Parable of the Wedding Feast, Jesus Christ at the Feast; an Angel bringing up to God the soul of the beggar Lazarus; the Prophet Isaiah and the sick king of Israel; the Parable of the Lost Sheep; the Woman and the lost piece of money; the Sainted Russian Princes; the story of the Baptism of Vladimir and Russia; the Blessing of the Righteous; the Heart of the King is in the Hand of God (literally); 'the Ways of the Righteous are bright'; the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord' (an Angel and Solomon); 'the Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom'; and finally the Story of Moses and the exploits of Joshua.

As may be seen by this enumeration, the didactic tendency dictated the choice of themes, even for the Tsar's chambers, and the choice was not so much a choice as a heaping together governed by the fear of leaving anything out rather than by any particular thought or artistic taste. As was the Palace in Moscow, so was its icon-painting and we see in it not so much a preference of one's own, of what has become dear, such as we saw at Nóvgorod and Súzdal', as a desire to crowd the whole of eastern orthodoxy together in Moscow. We may remember the theory that the ideas of the governors must rule the minds of the governed.

In actual fact, if we turn to the iconographic cycles of the Moscow icon-painters, we shall be astonished at the trouble they took to find models and portraits of the saints.

First, as before, must come the types of the Blessed Virgin: of these one must say that Moscow collected icons of them and sought them in the farthest confines of Russia and Siberia and beyond on Athos, and even as far as Italy and Spain in the west. The reason for this is that copies of the venerated icons of Rome, Sicily, and Italy came by chance to be brought to Russian churches and

there received veneration. And the people who venerated them used to give personal orders to the Moscow icon-painters to copy them. It was in this form of devotional icons that the pictures of the Virgin were multiplied. Let us enumerate just the most widely distributed types (the so-called *vo imya*, 'by the name of'); some are called after places, such as *Our Lady of Vladimir*, or of *Bogolyubov*, others take as their names pious epithets or exclamations or descriptions of the type.



126. *The Transfiguration*, Moscow,
middle of the 16th century. 71 x 55 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



127. *The Transfiguration*, end of the 16th century.
Ukrainian National Museum, Lviv, Ukraine.

The eastern Greco-Russian Church venerates hundreds of iconic types of the Virgin, but the Greeks have only the names left them, whereas the Russian Church is still in possession of the icons, and Russian icon-painting can, on receiving an order, execute any one of these types either after an original, or an iconic copy or a drawing. Since the seventeenth century, tiny copies of all of them have been circulating in coloured engravings. Moscow within her walls alone possesses forty-six originals or copies specially venerated or even rendered

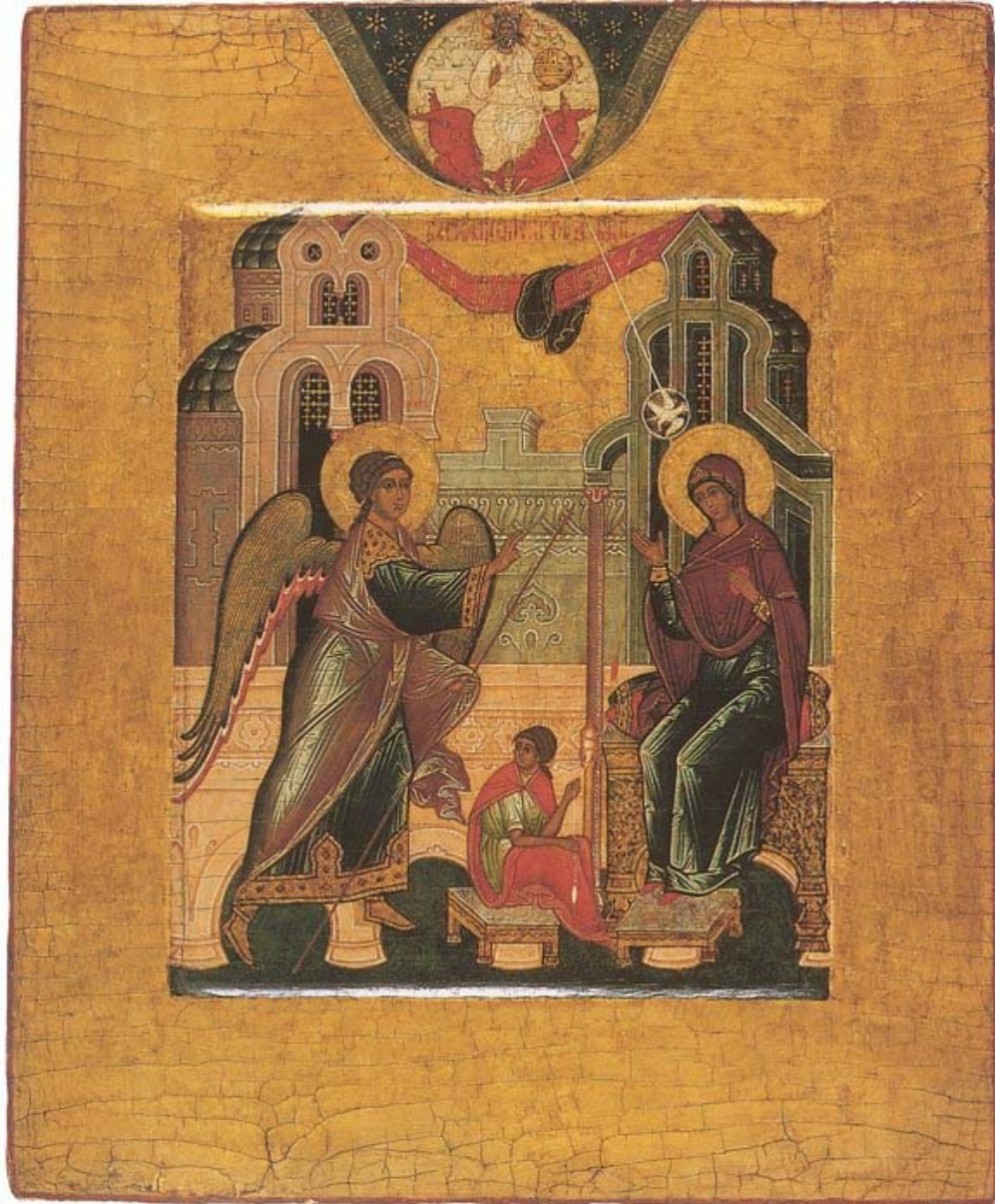
famous by miracles. Nearly all represent the Virgin with the Child in her arms, but the types and versions vary[\[156\]](#).

In Italy up to the middle of the sixteenth century many painters were painting pictures of the Madonna, and in Russia every icon-painter painted icons of the Theotokos, not infrequently his whole life long. All these half-lengths were mechanically done from tracings as they were exact likenesses of the same size as their originals: no modification was intended in any detail. How was it possible for mechanical work not to establish itself in such a field and end in one common manner? And again, from the other side, how hard it was for an icon-painter to practise personal creativeness!

It is impossible to enumerate the other Holy Faces of which Moscow collected a wide choice. By the seventeenth century the icon-painting of northern and eastern Russia, save for a few out of the way corners in Perm, Siberia, Chernigov and Kursk, almost came to an end. All the good commissions came to Moscow, and Moscow had to paint the saints of Ustyúg or Solovétsk. So, in the Moscow churches, there were many venerated icons of various saints, Russian, Greek, and eastern.

Among the saints held in greatest honour at Moscow a high place is taken by *S. John the Baptist* (*Prodromos*, *Predtécha*, the Forerunner, as he is more generally called in the Greek Church), not merely for his own sake as a great saint and prophet and the first of ascetics, but also as being the eponymous saint ('angel') of innumerable Johns. But in its expression of the very definite preference it showed for S. John, Moscow icon-painting went far beyond the repetition of the traditional type. This type was arrived at on the spot, in the Thebaid desert or else in Syria. The oldest example of an icon of the Baptist was that brought by Bishop Porphyry from Egypt or from Sinai. The little board about ten inches (25 cm) high was clearly the icon of a pilgrim to Palestine who took it back with him as a souvenir from the monastery of the Baptist, after visiting the site of the Baptism of Christ. Quickly and roughly executed in encaustic without any smoothing down of the patches of wax, it gives us a direct study from nature of a real anchorite, a man who could live his life in the desert and underwent all privations, who could do without human society, who fled away from it in order to save people and serve them as an example of asceticism. This precise type of an eremite, genuine and living, was a favourite with Byzantine art, which cared for nothing so much as character and scrupulously preserved all characteristic points, such as S. John's high stature, powerful frame, heavy arms, strong legs, and coarse features; only the nose of the Greek John became finer and more aquiline. But nowhere in Greek work do we find any change or toning down of the type, or of his indifferent calm, though the

composition was complicated by various symbolic attributes. In the Italo-Cretan icons we see rather a sombre type of John or one with a sad expression, very thin and almost like a skeleton in his arms and legs. The icons for the festival of the *Decollation of S. John* show him first all alone in the desert, and then in front of him on the ground his head upon the charger ready to be brought before Herodias. As he prays in the quiet of the hills the anchorite has a scroll with the words 'Lo, thou seest? God the Word, how thine elect suffer': and by a tree there lies an axe ready to hew down the tree 'that bringeth not forth good fruit'. Even more sombre in expression is the icon of *S. John with Wings* as the 'Angel of the Lord' announcing to the world the coming of the Saviour, but holding in his hands a chalice with the 'Sacrificial Lamb' lying within it in the naked form of the Child Jesus 'that taketh away the sins of the World'[\[157\]](#).



128. *The Annunciation*, Novgorod,
second half of 16th century. 41 x 33 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



129. *Wisdom Hath Built Her House*, Novgorod, 1548.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

In Russian work, big icons of S. John the Baptist are generally half-lengths, small ones are either half-lengths or whole. They keep to the Greek foundation and also the robing of the ermite in raiment of camel's hair, a long sheepskin cloak with the fleece outside, and wings and the chalice with the Lamb^[158], or else they just show the figure of the Baptist without any attributes except the cross or staff that he took up or a pilgrim's staff in his hands. Closely allied to figures of S. John the Baptist are those of other ascetic saints such as the *Holy*

Confessor Alexis the Man of God gives us a seventeenth-century version of the type. Above is the head of Christ as the young Emmanuel. The main icon was no doubt copied from a large 'fixed' icon in some chapel, and this had all the events of the saint's life about its margin. But these dried up and bony figures of emaciated ascetics wear an expression of spiritual calm and equanimity such as we cannot find either in Greco-Italian icons or in the paintings of the West, or yet in the famous S. John of Alexander Ivanov[\[159\]](#). This in itself is enough to convince us that the icon is capable of reaching the highest levels of expression, a concrete artistic embodiment of spiritual character and content embracing the highest principles in man. In a chapel of the cathedral of the Annunciation, and in many parish churches, are such remarkable icons of the Baptist; among them several by Procopius Chirin, both originals and copies, whether full or half-length. No better examples could be found with which to judge Moscow icon-painting, at least with regard to the question of balance between craftsmanship and true creativeness. The painter has stopped exactly at the point where one should have passed over into the other. The case of Simon Ushakov shows how difficult it is to remain within the bounds of a craft and yet exercise free creativeness. The history of Italian art shows us just as plainly that Cimabue and Duccio remained at icon-painting and within the bounds of a craft, whereas Giotto passed on to creativeness in wall-painting. Still we do find truly artistic works in icon-painting and one cannot but wish that certain Russian icons should be published in reproductions worthy of them.

Besides the general iconographic cycle and the Russian supplements to it, Moscow icon-painters in the sixteenth century accepted the whole of the new material elaborated by the Greco-Oriental school and regarded it as the last word in their craft. It mostly consisted in themes of a mystico-didactic character, then spreading everywhere. The Russian icon-painters followed eagerly after all such novelties. We can see this well by the question that Viskovaty[\[160\]](#), a clerk of the Tsar's Council, raised before the *Stoglav* Council. He called attention to the disturbing novelties introduced by the Nóvgorod and Pskov painters into the icons put into the cathedral of the Annunciation after the fire in 1547. One of the icons that offended his orthodoxy is still preserved in the cathedral: it hangs on the southern side-wall by the iconostas and contains four subjects, all of them didactic. *God rested on the Seventh, The Only-begotten Son, Come People, worship the Godhead in three Persons (Triipostasny), In the Grave with His Flesh, in Hell with His Soul as God*. Viskovaty, it is true, only pointed to particular parts of these icons and details, in particular the representation of God the Father Sabaoth, the hands of the Crucified One being 'slackened' (that is, drooping at the elbows after the western fashion), the Son in the Bosom of God

the Father, God the Father resting on the Seventh Day, and suchlike. The second meeting of the Council was under the direction of Silvester, a favourite of Ivan the Terrible, and it is possible that these theological subtleties, though there were undoubtedly offences against the principles of Byzantine iconography as laid down by the sixth and seventh Oecumenical Councils, were made in order to make political attacks upon Silvester. The Council had to use its authority to moderate the orthodox zeal of Viskovaty, and gave a decision which covered these novelties from the general standpoint of theology. Naturally, neither his protest nor the Council's definitions put a stop to the new movement. Ivan himself had inquired of the same Council how the *Old Testament Trinity* should be represented, some painters gave all three Angels cruciferous haloes, while others only to the central one. In view of the differing versions, 'how ought it to be according to the Divine Laws?' asked the Tsar. Some Nóvgorod interpreters, according to Joseph of Volokolamsk, thought that the Old Testament Trinity as a type of the Holy and Undivided Trinity must not be painted at all, because Abraham is entertaining God and two Angels. The answer to this 'heresy' is that in the icon of the Trinity all three Angels share the same throne^[161], but Angels cannot share the throne of God. We must add that archaeologists will scarcely be able to use these details to distinguish icons painted before the *Stoglav* Council from those after it, as both before and after different versions were used. All we can say is that serious regard for exact dogma in the details of representations cannot be marked before the Council of 1667, that is, just before the collapse of icon-painting.

Nevertheless at the end of the sixteenth century it was customary to place at the top of many icons the composition called *Paternity* (*Otechestvo*), or the well-known Western type of God the Word in the form of the *Great High Priest after the order of Melchisedec*, a theme much in favour in the sixteenth century, or *God of Sabaoth* in a similar form and figures of the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* within circles and stars^[162]. A favourite theme to present God the Word was a quadripartite icon with the subjects *In the Grave in His Flesh, In Hell with His Soul as God, And on the Throne with His Father, And in Paradise with the Penitent Thief*.

It was in the sixteenth century that there appeared icons and series of icons for the days and 'Festivals' of the *Lenten and Flowery Triodia*. The Lenten gives the chronicle of Christ's life up to His Passion, including *the Raising of Lazarus, the Entry into Jerusalem, the Parable of the Figtree, of the Ten Virgins, the Story of the Magdalene, the Institution of the Lord's Supper*, and so on for each day of Holy Week, and the Flowery Triodion all from the Resurrection to Trinity Sunday. There were separate icons of *All Saints Sunday* (first after Pentecost),

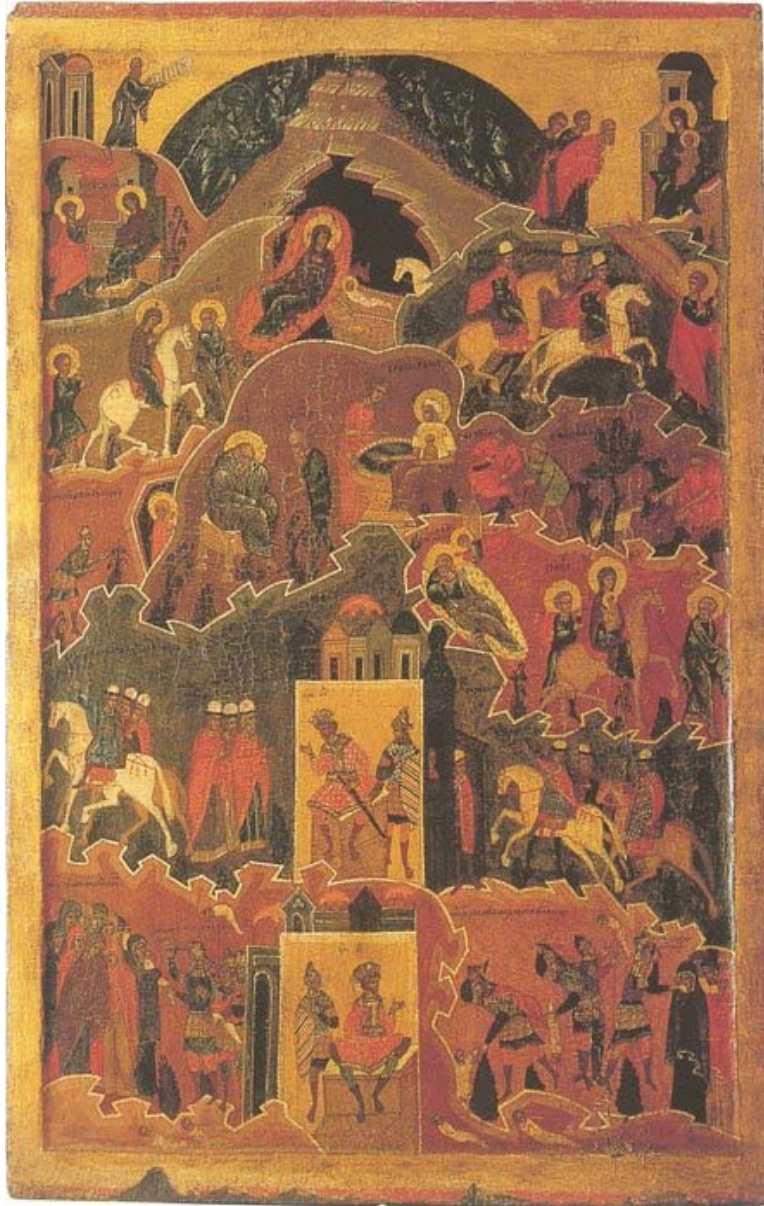
The Holy (Nicene) Fathers' Sunday (first after Ascension Day), *Orthodox Sunday* (first in Lent), *The Almighty in Strength*, *The Blessed Army of the Heavenly King*, *Thou art all Sweetness*, *Saviour*, icons of *Eight Parables*, *The Story of the Blind man and the Lame*[\[163\]](#) after the sermon of Cyril of Turov, *The Restoration of the Church of the Resurrection*, *Father Glorify Thy Son*, *The Icon of the Seven Sacraments*, *of the Ten Commandments*, *Let God Arise*, *Icons on Psalms Ixxxix or cxlviii*.

Special favourites were icons furnished with profound explanation of theological parallels, with text on the frame, and even metrical verse included. Such is the icon of *The Fruits of Our Lord's Suffering on the Cross*, which was also circulated in the seventeenth century as an engraving after the Kievo-Moldavian icon-painting[\[164\]](#), and in the later *fryaz'*: in the midst we have the Crucifixion in all its height, length, and depth, the tree of Salvation with many fruits upon it, the Church as a ship with the Evangelists, Death struck down by God's right hand, Hell fettered, and so on. The best-known subject of all is *Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her Seven Pillars*, which comes in the service for Lady Day. The subject, taken quite literally, was common upon the walls of monastic refectories and porches, also on cups carved in coconut and in carved icons. It unites material from the Old and New Testaments, the Crucifixion under a baldachino standing upon seven thin columns, by it the Temple at Jerusalem, and a feast according to the text which follows, 'She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine, she hath also furnished her table. She hath sent forth her maidens, calling together with a high summons'. There follows a sermon upon wisdom and folly, with allegories according.

Eastern iconography found a source and a model in the ingenious theological dialectic which exercised itself in 'profound' interpretations. This includes, for instance, the interpretation given in the sixteenth century to an interesting detail in the composition of the *Descent of the Holy Ghost*[\[165\]](#).



130. *Sunday of the Triumph of the Orthodoxy*,
Melkite icon of the 18th century. Abou Adal Collection, Paris.



131. *The Nativity of Christ*, Kholmogory,
Russian, end of the 16th century. 31 x 83 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

The oldest version of the scene showed the Twelve Apostles sitting in a semicircle like a synod or council. In the midst they later set the Virgin as the image of the Church, or within this semicircle was added [\[166\]](#) the crowd that had come to hear the Apostles, in wonder and confusion talking various languages. Finally, to give more dignity, for the crowd was substituted an allegorical figure of the Cosmos in the form of a crowned man holding upon his

knees an open scroll supposed to contain the Gospel, preaching in all the languages of the world in accordance with the text at the end of S. Matthew and the apocryphal stories of the Apostles preaching in all lands. Soon, however, icon-painters either failed to understand what was meant by the empty space round which the Apostles were sitting, or confused the idea of Cosmos with that of the Earth. Either way they took to making this space into a kind of dark cave, and separated it off by an arch upon columns. This continues to be done both in Greek and Russian icons. The final result was the following interpretation arising among the Greeks in the fifteenth century, reaching Russia by the sixteenth and preserved in the Painters' Guides. 'The world is old because of the sin of Adam: he sits in a dark place, because he remains in unbelief: he is vested in a red robe (as the King Cosmos) as a witness of his having offered bloody sacrifices to devils: his crown means the kingdom of Sin, he holds a cloth (his scroll, misunderstood) with twelve scrolls, these are the Twelve Apostles' [\[167\]](#).

To conclude this survey of Moscow icon-painting in the sixteenth century from the side of content and subjects, it may be remarked that besides those enumerated there came in, especially towards the end of the century, morally edifying and also eschatological subjects such as *The Last Judgement*, *The Apocalypse*, *The Canons (Hymns) at the Passing of the Soul*, *Visions of the Life after Death*, *Visits to the Torments of Sinners*, and the like, but as this class of icon did not really spread until the next century, and then took new models derived from Greek and South Slav iconography, we shall examine it later.

If we now pass on to the technique of the sixteenth-century Moscow school, the first examples to take are the great 'fixed' icons with scenes added all round them, which are the most prominent productions of the time. In the Uspenski Sobor are two great icons (more than two metres high) representing the Metropolitans of Moscow, *Peter* and *Alexis* [\[168\]](#): they come next after the Nóvgorod originals, and in them we have visible all the characteristic points of late Nóvgorod work, slender proportions, the contours of the folds scarcely indicated, and quite without plastic modelling, small extremities, a monumental placing of the subjects very much, so to speak, the icon; the ornamentation of the bishops' vestments is very rich, and there are many figures in white raiment. S. Peter is vested in a pale greenish *sakkos* with gold circles upon it, and a white head-gear [\[169\]](#). Brown vestments are marked with light blue complementary reflexes, and all the draperies are relieved by varicoloured reflexes which give a kind of transparency to the shadows. But the chief merit of the Moscow icons, and the chief point in which they differ from those of Nóvgorod, is their colouring, which was the great achievement of the craftsmen of the mid sixteenth century: it was on this that they prided themselves. Against the light

gold grounds of the central fields, or the pale turquoise of the surrounding scenes[\[170\]](#).

We see in the one case the delicate half-tones of pale ochre, yellowish-buff vestments, tender blue, bright turquoise, subtle *prázelen*’, delicate carmine, and only a few rich patches of brick red, pure brown, dark crimson, and bright vermilion or *thick prázelen*’ standing out strongly against the general water-colour effect. Specially decorative is the colour of the hills, the regular Nóvgorod ‘heels’, greenish, mauvish, and the buildings of white-buff stone and pink marble.

In the State Russian Museum there is a most remarkable icon of *Andrew the Fool*, and two splendid fixed icons of a large size: *The Old Testament Trinity with its Deeds*, and *The Transfiguration with Small Festivals* likewise. These were obtained from the nunnery of the Virgin’s Protection at Súzdal’ which has been already, mentioned as a rich storehouse of early Russian work. The icon of *Andrew* is not accessible for reproduction, though it is very similar in style to Nóvgorod work.



132. *Saint John the Baptist*, Novgorod, 15th to 16th century.
The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.



133. *Saint John the Precursor in the Desert*,
 Moscow, first half of the 17th century.
 From the Chudov Monastery of Moscow Kremlin.
 The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

That of the *Trinity* produces a perfect effect with its colouring: Novgorod icons, even that in the church of Ss. Peter and Paul, *Let everything that hath breath Praise the Lord*, cannot compare with it. In the icon of the *Trinity*, as in those of *Peter* and *Alexis*, the beauty is founded upon the opposition between the generally light colours and the rich contrasts. In this the colouring is incomparably richer; instead of a general effect like that of a water-colour, we

have almost the richness and depth of oil-painting of the time of the great early Flemings, and this not only in the central picture but in the small fields all round. The marvellous subtlety and harmony of the juxtapositions of colour, brown and green, light blue and chocolate, bright vermilion with dark green, tender reddish ochre with pale *prdzelen*, as well as the way in which each little scene is lit up by a tiny spot of bright vermilion, make the whole icon like a precious picture in enamel, brilliant in decorative beauty. At the same time, the icon is meant to rouse interest among lovers of theological subtleties with its far-fetched content: in the thirty compartments round the icon of the *Trinity* are represented all the appearances of Angels, either mentioned in Holy Scripture or supposed by its interpreters: for instance, the appearance of the 'Angel of the Lord' instead of God the Father, or God the Word in the Creation and Fall of Man and the casting down of the Devils, in the company of Tobit, the appearance to Moses together with the Burning Bush, the appearance to Joshua and suchlike. In these pictures the artist has carefully diversified the soil of the hill or mountain on which he has arranged his figures, distinguishing yellow or reddish rocks, pale greyish shale and green meadows, to make his composition clearer. Particularly curious is the little picture which shows Lot's wife as a Greek statue in white marble instead of a pillar of salt alongside of the blazing city of Sodom, but no less attractive are all the others executed with mastery and care.

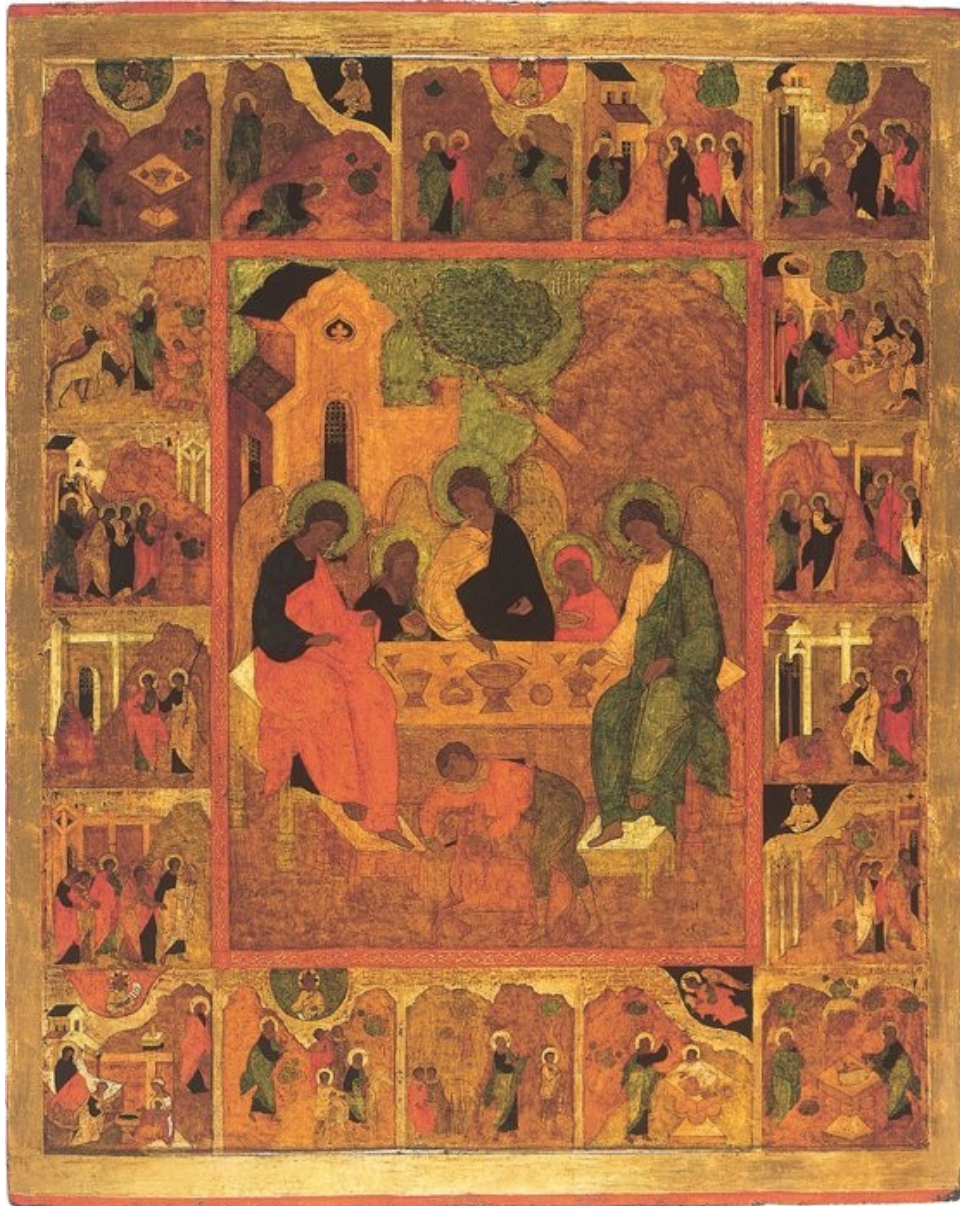
The cathedral of the Annunciation at Moscow preserves untouched, as an archaeologist would have, the precious iconostases of the small chapels fitted up in three of the small domes about 1563-4. We know that the decoration of the cathedral was directed by Pope Silvester himself, and that he invited for the purpose the best skilled of Nówgorod and Pskov. Some of the icons have kept their silver frames with enamel or filigree adornments and the original olive varnish. In the chapel of the *Assembly (Sobor) of Our Lady* is a beautiful icon of that subject and of the *Nativity of Our Lord*, both of perfect drawing and painting, beautiful for the colours, the play of brown and deep red with weak reflexes of *prdzelen* and light blue, laid on in the 'fused' manner. It is curious that the features on the tiny heads are treated so that one thinks of them as large. In the chapel of the *Assembly of the Archangel Gabriel* is a magnificent icon of the *Annunciation* with Italian buildings. This time Gabriel's mantle is of bright vermilion like that of a warrior, while his chiton is *prázelen*. The usual colour for the himation in the sixteenth century is light buff, and the Italians make the under-garment dark mauve. The fellow icon to this is the *Assembly of Gabriel*, while next to it the *Hodegetria of Smolensk* is of quite different style, though of the same date and likewise 'fused'. Another workshop executed the icons of the chapel of the *Entry into Jerusalem*, creating a fixed icon of that festival and one

of the *Raising of Lazarus*. In all the chapels the Royal Doors have pictures of the *Annunciation* and the *Evangelists* with perhaps the *Trinity* above and the *Eucharist*[\[171\]](#).

These icons are most valuable as precise evidence of the transfer to Moscow of the Nóvgorod workshops and their blending with the tradition of Súzdal'. It is interesting to know that during the Troublous Times all the icons were taken from the chapels and stored in the department of the Great Treasury and put back in 1614, having been handed over to the cathedral in accordance with an exact description and inventory of all the decorations and precious stones set in the haloes and an enumeration of those which had previously been lost. The exactness of the description, which notes that one icon has 'half its frame torn away', or 'no haloes', or 'haloes and shoulder ornaments taken away', proves that in the time of Michael Feodorovich these icons were already old. It is typical that some of the defects noted have never been supplied and remain defects until this day.



134. *Saint John the Precursor, Angel of the Desert*,
second half of the 16th century.
Andrei Rublëv Museum, Moscow.



135. *The Trinity with the Genesis*, Central Russia (?),
end of the 16th century to the beginning of the 17th century.
137 x 110 cm. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

A type of painting, distinguished by highly ornamental clothes and vestments, appeared at Moscow in the mid sixteenth century and is a late echo of the Italo-Cretan icon-painting going back to Venetian and late Sienese models. *Upon thy right hand did stand the Queen* shows Christ as the Great High Priest after the order of Melchisedec: he is flanked by the Virgin and S. John the Baptist. An inscription upon the back states that the icon was presented by the Metropolitan

Macarius with his blessing to Ivan Ivanovich, son of Ivan the Terrible, about 1562. The icon has now been beautifully cleaned and restored. Christ wears a crown, a royal dalmatic of brocade, with an omophorion, holds a sceptre and Gospel in His hands, and is seated upon a throne. The Virgin is likewise crowned and vested as a Queen; S. John wears a long garment of camel's hair with a himation over it. All three figures are absolutely iconic in immobility, unnaturally slender proportions, and the deathly want of expression in the faces. They give us the poorest possible hopes of the future of the art. For this asceticism is no expression of something belonging to real life, but merely the mark of the icon impressed upon Christian pictures and turning them into empty and lifeless forms. The only thing that seems alive in the icon is the decorative side and the elaborate vestments. This makes the icon kin to the precious palls and hangings in silk and gold thread: it is by no mere chance that about 1556 the Tsarítsa Anastásia Románovna executed in her broidery room just such a hanging, of this same subject, for an altar on Mount Athos (now in Khilandar). There is the same insipid piety in the faces, the same soft smoothness in the forms, and the same lifelessness in the whole picture^[172].

We can now make definite claims about the first Moscow school of icon-painting, that it made its own the best traditions of the Súzdal' school and of Rublëv; assimilated in the middle of the sixteenth century the flower of the Nóvgorod and Pskov schools, enlarged its local stock of iconographic themes by taking in the subjects in favour over the whole of Russia and, with them, new Greek compositions, and finally concentrated its creative power upon the elaboration of the decorative or colouristic side of the icon.

To make a comparative judgement, let us take two representations of the *Ascension*: one a small votive icon (with the patron saints of the family in the borders), and another in the church of S. Giorgio dei Greci at Venice. The icons are of about the same date and it looks at first sight as if the Russian were copied from the Greek. However, there are divergences: there are no trees and in accordance with the old tradition the circle ascending into the sky is borne aloft not by two but by four Angels, and in heaven the doors of the celestial paradise stand open. The Russian icon does show assimilation of the Greek composition, but again, how commonplace is the Greek icon, and at the same time, how stiff and affected. One group, with S. Peter, is thinking sadly of the departing Saviour, the other with S. Paul is triumphantly waving its arms foreseeing the grandeur of the Church: the Russian icon makes no difference between the groups; they show astonishment, fear, and regret, all of them hold up their hands. But the Russian is a masterpiece of colouring. The ground is pale turquoise, upon it the colours stand out as if on fire, dark red, dark violet, blue, bright

vermilion, brilliantly red almost orange ochre, misty *prázelen'* of the himation above dark blue or ochre; this play of colour is like jewels, rubies, garnets, topazes, all fused with a most tender touch. Against the many coloured crowd, two Angels, in palest blue and white robes counterchanged, stand out like light falling from heaven. That is why we cannot deny a level of merit to Moscow icon-painting in the sixteenth century. In colouring it is the equal of the Venetian masters and handed on this colouring even into the seventeenth century.

These last triumphs of Moscow icon-painting are largely due to its having recruited for itself many craftsmen working for the Stroganovs in northern and eastern Russia. And again, these craftsmen finding themselves in Moscow began to work in the taste of the place and particularly they acquired, what we have just described, the harmonious colouring.



136. *The Christ in the Royal Crown*, 17th to 18th century.
Private Collection, Bamberg.



The 17th Century

The Stroganov School and the Early 17th Century

The 'Stróganov school' of Russian icon-painting is a term as vague and uncertain in meaning as that of the 'Korsun school'. Some define it extremely widely, including all Moscow icons of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Others negate its existence, or at any rate, ask the question what really was the Stroganov school. This includes the great students and collectors, Filimonov, of fifty years ago, and now N. P. Likhachëv. The only facts we really know amount to this: that the great commercial magnates of north and east Russia, the Stroganov family, had their establishments at Ustyúg, Sol'výchegodsk, and Perm, and were, in these regions, great builders and adorners of churches, and that somewhere (we do not know where) they kept a workshop of their own for painting icons. This existed for two generations at least and from it proceeded a series of northerners, skilled craftsmen known either by tracings in Painters' Guides, or by their actual works at Moscow or by their having passed into the Tsar's service. There is an idea that this Stroganov school took over the traditions of some Ustyúg school, but this is not a fact, but only an idle guess of dilettanti who knew no more early Ustyúg icons than we do (as even D. A. Rovinski admits). This holds unless we are to admit from Ustyúg any northern icons, mostly emanating from monasteries, and offering pictures of the saints specially honoured in the north. On the contrary it is to the Stroganovs that icon-painting in the north and east of Russia is indebted for turning it to a better future. They were the first, as Rovinski himself puts it very definitely, 'to see icon-painting as an art and to take trouble about the beauty of icons and the variety of compositions'. 'The Stroganovs' icon-painters', he goes on to say,

‘more exactly the men who executed the orders given by the Stroganovs, used to make new designs and rarely repeated one and the same icon without making variations and additions.’ This is a very important statement, but it ought to be substantiated by a study of the icons themselves. As a matter of fact, we notice in the masters who are known to have worked for the Stroganovs, *e.g.* Stephen Borozdín, Procopius Chírín, and Nicephorus Sávin, a tendency to rearrange ‘orders’[\[173\]](#) of people, of Christ’s disciples and suchlike, and an inclination to a new arrangement and modern forms in the buildings, while keeping the old compositions.

These same icons followed the common tradition in the shape of tracings, and thus we have under the name of ‘Stroganov icons’ often nothing more than copies. The only thing would be to go through the works ascribed to each master and assign each his individual peculiarities, if such there be; this would give us something to go on in distinguishing the Stroganov men from the ruck of Moscow painters who imitated them wholesale. This was impossible at the end of the nineteenth century, because nearly all collections were inaccessible, whether public or private, in particular that of the Counts Stroganov in Petersburg[\[174\]](#). The house of Stroganov, as the biographer of one member of the house writes[\[175\]](#), was already in the fifteenth century distinguishing itself among noble Russian families by various services to the State. Its great wealth had been acquired by large-scale commercial enterprises and was utilised for the subduing of the Cheremísa, Ostyaks, Votyaks and Nogai, and finally for the invitation extended to Ermák Timofíevich and his Don cossacks to conquer Siberia. They this carried through with their own resources, as also the protection of Kazan during the Troublous Times for the good of Russia. The state of things in north Russia from Vologda to Perm gave the first place to the Stroganovs as leaders of the infant civilisation, and their taking part in the painting of icons was no doubt for the advancement of the art.

This is why out that, of the dark background of Russian traditions about icon-painting, there has to this day stood out a kind of faith in the independent development of the art in north-east Russia among craftsmen working for the Stroganovs or in workshops belonging to them. The modern Russian icon-painter does recognise the importance of the ancient Nóvgorod school, but of special significance is the skill of the Stroganov school. In this there are distinguished three manners, first, second, and third: the last being also called the Baron’s. But it is quite clear that into the first is put all works which can boast beauty of colour and perfect execution. Into the second and third classes go all the best of the Tsar’s painters and workshops, and so the icon-painting of Moscow simply vanishes in this generalisation. But this vague tradition of the

icon-painters and their minute subdivisions bring us to the actual facts, such as those collected by Rovinski who was guided by what the icon-painters in Moscow told him, and so we find ourselves on firmer ground. We can say this much; for the end of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries we have a series of names of painters who worked for the Stroganovs, but from the early part of the seventeenth some of these passed over to the Tsar's service and for the second half of this century there are no more such names.

Thus, only after the cleaning and publication of the Stroganovs' own collection of icons shall we be able definitely to judge of what their patronage meant to the art. Nothing which is pointed to in other collections inspires confidence. The icon-painters and Rovinski point to certain technical peculiarities as marking Stroganov icons: seasoning the planks so perfectly that the icons are without the warping seen in Moscow work; special cleats glued across the boards, different cross-pieces, different sizes. All this could easily be borrowed and accepted and gives no definite data. Even an icon with the saints whose names recall those of the Stroganov family may, thus, be nothing more than a copy of a good icon, just as an icon signed by a master who worked for the Stroganovs may also only be a copy. In the workshops they often kept such copies as models.

The names of the Stroganov masters which are confirmed by their actual works are not many in number: Stephen Ref'ev or Arefiev, an icon dated 1596 for Nicetas Stroganov, Seméyko Borozdín, 1601; Sobolëv, 1598; Pershkin, Istóma Sávin, and the Muscovite, Nazarius Istómin, icons with the years 1615 and 1654; especially Nicephorus the *Mélochnik*, so called from icons with many tiny figures in them, and of these many are assigned to him. Procopius Chirin worked for the Stroganovs, but was at the same time was the Tsar's icon-painter. Others did the same, including Emelian of Moscow. In general, the orders given by the Stroganovs sometimes required in composition, improvement of the design, details, buildings, and hills, also the rendering of the figures and their distribution. For this reason, we must not assign to their orders the whole mass of icons which are pleasant in colour, rather, we must judge by the design.



137. *Saint Boris and Saint Gleb and Scenes from Their Lives*,
 Moscow School, first third of the 17th century (frame)
 beginning of the 20th century (central image).
 91 x 71 cm. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



138. *The Last Judgement*, Stroganov School,
end of the 16th century to the beginning of the 17th century.
From the Sol'vycegodsk Annunciation Cathedral.
Museum of History and Art, Sol'vycegodsk, Russia.

We have already pointed out that such a Russian icon as that entitled *The Commencement of the Indiction* is a late copy of a version which with remarkable buildings in the background that reproduces the complicated design of the Nóvgorod or Pskov school. The buildings ought to represent Nazareth (Luke iv.16), however they have definite characteristics which must belong to Jerusalem with the Temple, the semicircle of the Sigma, and the Jaffa gates. This

is the place to observe what additions by one of the Stroganov men, Seméyko Borozdín. His *Passing (Provozhénie) of the Year* (the State Russian Museum, No. 2259) gives the same subject. For one thing, the buildings are much simplified, being reduced to a decorative backscene; on the left a citadel or little town with entrance gates and a portcullis, a church and houses inside, then the town walls in the form of a building with windows above, and to the right a single building with an entrance also closed by a grating. There is no temple and Christ is preparing to read, unrolling the Bible at a lectern in the middle of an open space outside the wall. This may be a reminiscence of the processional prayers at *Lobnoe Mêsto* (Calvary), Moscow, the execution-place just outside the Kremlin walls. We have altogether lost the charm of distant unknown Jerusalem. There are no shaly rocks and a higher place for Christ in the centre, with the people below on each side. Now both groups, the priests with white cowls holding up both hands to the Saviour, and the people quietly conversing in a close group, stand on the same level. The execution of these two groups is finely and neatly done, both the types and faces and even their expressions attentive and reverent, and again their clothes severely and correctly draped, and so is Christ's figure. But for all this merit, as an icon, there has been a loss of all the liveliness seen in the Nóvgorod version, which shows us how a new teacher came into the synagogue, new though one of themselves, and began to read and explain the Bible. Even the text which is suitable for the New Year, Luke iv. 18,19, ending 'to preach the acceptable year of the Lord' has given place to v. 24, 'No prophet is accepted in his own country'.

The icon of *Our Lady's Dormition*, signed by Stephen (probably Stephen Pakhir' and not Stephen Arefiev who was earlier in date), may serve as an example of the Stroganov school at the moment of its merging into the Muscovite. The virtuosity of the draperies is in the taste of Procopius Chirin of the early seventeenth century, but quite clearly Muscovite. Indeed, we have in it a repetition of all the peculiarities of Chirin and Borozdin, whose new achievements found special favour in Moscow. It is the old composition rearranged. The old pyramidal construction has disappeared, and Christ with the Virgin's soul (in the form of a swathed child even bound about with a cord) is on the same level as the two Bishops and the two pairs of women. The Apostles are in crowded groups, and below by the bed crouch Athonius and the Angel, the former with his hand cut off. So we get a full version of the *Dormition*, but very small with many tiny figures. Its good points are partly in the expressions, much more in the elegance of its new tiny design with swelling lines and in the colours. In the drawing a few effects are most skilfully brought out, the soft melting folds, the fanciful play of fine zigzags. The colouring is mostly in half-

tones, buff, orange, smoky brown, dark green and Venetian velvet, and on such a foundation bright vermilion and 'flamelike' orange. The delicate tones of ochre passing into the finest fused 'painting in smoke' give the flesh the colour of old ivory with no trace of redness. The little patches of high light (*dvízhki*) reappear in most delicate lines, and on red draperies are the wider lighted planes (*probêly*). Finally, the chief point in this manner is in the skilful use of liquid gold, by which the shadows and lights are put in with the very finest hatching such as that of a metal engraver. The general impression is that of fine and skilful icon-painting, but only as a craft: this accounts for the comparatively large number of good painters and the many examples of their work.

To the same Stephen or to Nicephorus is assigned an icon of *The Communion of the Apostles*. Although it shows most of the marks of the early Moscow style in arrangement, drawing, and colours, the execution is so weak that we must regard the icon as a copy or the work of a pupil or school-work, the drawing being incorrect and the colours muddy. Other icons assigned to the Stroganov style, such as the detailed icon of the *Assembly of the Twelve Apostles*, ascribed to Emelian Moskvitin and painted for Maxim Stroganov, are generally in the ordinary Moscow style with small figures and elaborate detail, and have no marks that should distinguish the Stroganov masters.



139. *Sophia, The Wisdom of God*,
Stroganov School, 14th century.
Icon Museum, Recklinghausen, Germany.



140. *The Decollation of Saint John the Baptist*,
Stroganov School, 14th century.
Icon Museum, Recklinghausen, Germany.

Nicephorus Sávin, son of Istóma, a painter who worked both for the Stroganovs and for Michael Feodorovich, is known by many, created icons distinguished by the care with which the small figures are executed, and the large amount of shading and heightening in gold. A triptych in the collection of I. K. Rakhmánov in the Rogozhski cemetery has in the centre *Our Lady of Vladimir*, and round her festivals with orders (*chiný* or *liki*) on the wings[\[176\]](#). A

thousand tiny figures are in it painted with elaborate care, so that the subject is distinguishable even at a distance, and the beauty of the various deep patches of colour is set off by the shine of gold and vermillion and bright rows of saints in white apparel. But the chief effect, being due to the gold, whether flat or in relief, is the skilful craftsmanship. Rovinski notes three more icons by Nicephorus, *The Healing of the Blind Man* (sixth Sunday after Easter), *The Miracle of the Snake*, and the *Guardian Angel*, and in other collections many other subjects, including *The Procession of the True Cross*, the *Dormition*, and the *Protection of Our Lady*, and particular saints, *S. Theodore* and others. All of these are small scale votive icons, famous for their detailed care, but falling far short of the first rate merited to Procopius Chirin's work with their severe beauty of figures and expression. Many other detailed icons are but down to Nicephorus; for instance, a small *Deesis* in the Rogozhski church with God of Sabaoth in the middle, the Virgin, S. John the Baptist, the two Archangels, and the two Princes of the Apostles. The figures are correct (in the iconic convention), well proportioned (in the same sense), and handsome, but either without character or with the special points exaggerated, *e.g.* the Baptist's legs are like sticks, his beard and S. Paul's are twisted into seven locks as if they had been curled, the faces are without expression. The chief merit is in the handling of gold lines and hatchings[177]. In Soldátenkov's collection, now at Rogozhski, is a *Burial of S. John the Divine*: on a mountain in the Isle of Patmos is a walled town with churches inside: below in a ravine a group of inhabitants who have come to say good-bye to S. John; the latter is in a cave parting with Prochorus. To one side three youths with spades as grave-diggers, deep in grief. At the top S. John stands in prayer among the Angels as if he had already risen, behind a hill Prochorus is sadly telling the tale to a group of townsmen. The whitish ochre is unpleasant, and the light tone over the whole faces and parts of the body give them a kind of puffy look: the figures, being almost twelve heads high, are much too slender[178].

The icon of *S. Theodore the Tiro's Miracle with the Serpent* in the brilliance of its technique may be attributed to Nicephorus and, if his, is a better specimen of work. It shows the old splendour of colour in patches of the favourite hues, but the special merit is the extraordinary fineness of touch, which allows of such shades of expression in eyes and lips as only Procopius Chirin had attained. Equally striking is the detailed work in liquid gold upon the armour, hair, and ornaments of the throne upon which the dragons are crowning Theodore's mother. But all this detailed work brings with it characteristic decay due to the straining after decorative adornment: *e.g.* the hills have lost their characteristic severity and are elaborated till they look like waves breaking; and the buildings

of the town are heaped together without any plan or construction. There is a childish amusement about the toy like forms and muzzles of the dragons. The figure of Theodore the Tiro appears to be copied from types by Procopius Chirin, but this and all the detailed fineness of work make us less ready to pardon the coarse incorrectness of its exaggerated proportions or the drawing of the horse more like a monstrous mule.

Procopius Chirin (we have notices of him from 1620 to 1642), although he worked as a first-class painter for the Stroganovs and afterwards was salaried by the Tsar; and although he made original drawings, and invented new iconic compositions for subjects set to him, was still ignorant of anything but the conventional iconic drawing and this he had no occasion or no power to correct by reference to better models or to nature. His figures are exaggerated in their slenderness (ten heads) and leanness (we mean his own original works, not merely icons coming from his studio), the heads and extremities are very small, quite tiny, the weak and knees bend outwards as if they were broken, the bodies are thin and the shoulders narrow, the shins long and again very thin. As regards the drapery and its folds, he tried to make them hang intelligibly in accordance with their position, but evidently never used sketches from actual drapery or from a manikin; and he arranged them, especially mantles and cloaks, without elegance or taste. What he really set himself to do was to paint in the utmost detail chasubles, *sakkoi*, breastplates, and even chain armour, the latter copied from actual armour, so as to show off his mastery of the tiniest detail: this can be well seen in the icon of *Our Lord* at Rogozhski, in the figure of *S. John the Warrior* who falls at His feet. So again his hills are more like some strange leafage of needles or scales than natural rocks, though this fault we find also in Simon Ushakov and all the *fryaz'* school. But Procopius has a real originality of his own in the remarkable force of expression upon the faces of his saints (not so much in the case of Christ or the Virgin), as in their steadfast fervent prayer they fix their eyes upon the Lord and his Angels who are revealed to them in the skies. This is a new version of prayer to Christ; it is founded upon a western not a Greek model. This expression is attained by almost the same means as were employed by Giotto and the Sienese painters when they wished to impress a look of religious ecstasy upon a face: the eyes are strained and fixed and narrowed, the brows are morbidly, nervously contracted, and the gaze concentrated upon the picture or holy vision. Finally, Procopius stands out among all the Stroganov painters for his wonderful colours: vermilion with a lovely orange shade, a soft and transparent velvety dark green, and a brilliant ochre coat, and especially for the gold laid on with the brush in marvellous patterns upon brocades or shining softly upon vessels and plate.

The icon of *S. John the Warrior* is a delightful example of Procopius Chirin. The Saint is, as it were, going forward to meet the heavenly vision of the Virgin with the Child upon a throne amid a company of Angels: his face has the features of John Stroganov, of whom he was patron and to whom the icon was given. Like jewels shine the red cloak, dark jerkin, and the scales and patterns of his corslet. The shadows of the cloak are painted 'smokily' upon the shoulders; the flesh is in the fused manner.

The icon of *S. John the Baptist*, painted by Procopius Chirin for Andrew and Vera Stroganov, must have been splendid. Full length, with the big head of a typical old hermit under an imposing leonine mane rising up from his forehead in thick masses and falling to his shoulders, his beard thin and tightly twisted: the face is of the most magnificent type, dry and ascetic; on each side stretch mighty wings. Behind the Prophet are little hills, and a gnarled oak with an axe stuck into the ground at its root. We know of it from a tracing which gives the outlines, while an ungrammatical inscription tells who painted it and for whom, and it indicates the colours to be used by any copyist, 'background and earth light *sankir*'. It might well be thought that the well-known icon of S. John in the Tret'yakov Gallery, with compartments all round the edge, is a replica by Procopius himself. The icon of *Nicetas the Martyr*^[179] (nearly fifteen inches high) in Ostroúkhov's collection is probably a late but genuine work of Chirin's: it may be but a very good copy, as the hands and feet are excessively small, compared for instance with the icon of S. John the Warrior, and though the general outline is similar it seems rather the exaggeration of a too eager copyist giving the whole figure a kind of toy like look. We can see the same in the folds of the mantle, unnecessarily broken and pinched; finally the fur edging of the tunic is so long and hairy as to raise doubts whether it is authentic. So too the face has lost the strong expression of emotion as it turns to the heavenly vision. The same elaboration of detail in garments and trappings, and the tiny scale of the extremities, is seen in the icons of the two Uglich saints, *Demetrius the Tsarevich*, and *Prince Romanus*. The vanished *riza*, which covered the background with a plate of silver gilt, would have carried out the scheme of the gold-embroidered garments. Above appears *Our Lady of the Sign* in a circle of cloud and bearing Emmanuel within a circle.



141. *Iconostasis from the Church of the Holy Spirit, 1650. Rogatin, Ukraine.*



142. *Iconostasis from the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 1630s-1735.*
Drohobych, Lviv region, Ukraine.



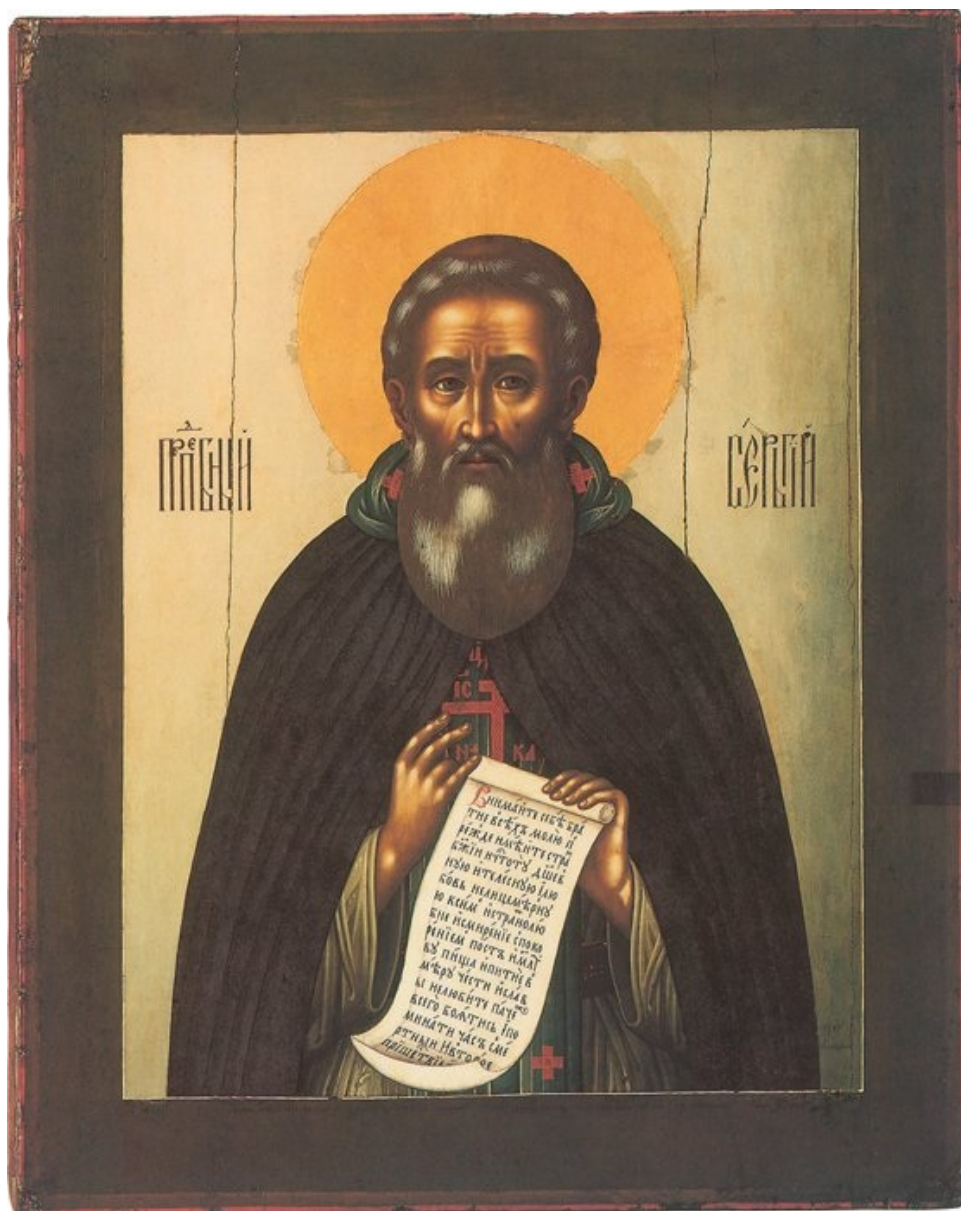
143. Simon Ushakov, *Apotheosis of the Virgin of Vladimir or The Genealogical Tree of the Muscovite State*, 1668.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

But the historical importance of Procopius Chirin's skill is like that of Cimabue and Duccio. In each case what these masters elaborated was peculiarly accessible to their pupils and successors. We can see his manner going on in a whole long series of works, some much weaker, but others better in technique; the great thing is that they are new both in design and in manner and the next icon is a good example of this.

The icon of *S. Alexis the Metropolitan* is so magnificent in technique, and so

beautiful in the gentle expression on the face of the saint, that it might be put down to Procopius himself but for certain details of its artistic manner. Procopius is recalled by the slightly bent figure of the old man, the gaze full of anxious emotion, the detailed treatment of the features and still more of the hairs of the beard, and the patterns done in liquid gold upon the sakkos, pallium, and white head dress and the almost identical composition of the company of angels flanking Christ enthroned. But against these considerations must be set new ones marking another manner more after the fashion of free painting. The whole of the sky is taken up with bluey-grey swirling clouds, their edges marked with liquid gold: this gives a special atmosphere to the scene of the saint's fervent prayer. He is praying according to the iconic convention, like the Baptist or some eremite, amid a hilly desert upon a shaly slope of fantastically serrated rocks with a scanty vegetation of dry herbs, dandelions and little shrubs painted in liquid gold to give their autumn colouring. The rocks, some pale green, a kind of dead colour, some bright yellow or orange, harmonise wonderfully with the religious theme. But who was the craftsman who found this sky and its tones in some western model that we do not yet know? We shall only find out when at the same time we can put a name to two icons, one of *Boris and Gleb* on horseback, the other of *Basil the 'Blessed'* (*Vasili Blazhénny*), showing the same peculiarities and even higher skill[\[180\]](#).

Of the same make is an icon of *S. John the Baptist* praying in the wilderness before the opened heavens, in which appears Christ enthroned surrounded by angels. The big, central figure stands out against a background of landscape on a much smaller scale, to suit a number of tiny scenes set amid the little buff shaly hills: S. John led by an angel into the wilderness; wild beasts hiding in the ravines; S. John drawing water from the Jordan, and suchlike[\[181\]](#); the whole landscape is more or less like a hill, and along the top runs a thick wood of dwarf oaks, and above this again a greyish turquoise sky. The fantastic play of tiny shaly hills, more like a mass of coral groves and the equally tiny oak woods, become, from this point in time, the regular thing in elegant painting and still survive in certain shops at Mstëra as examples of the free painting of old allowed to enter into icons. Along with this fancy drawing we also find a special scale of colours dominated by pale tender blue, light turquoise, pale green and yellowy buff. A good example of this colouring is an icon of the *Baptism of Our Lord* in the State Russian Museum.



144. Simon Ushakov, *Sergius of Rádonezh*, 1669.
49 x 39 cm. From the Trinity Lavra of Saint Sergius.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



145. *Mandylion or Holy Face*, middle of the 16th century.
National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kiev.

An icon of the *Archangel Michael*, *Alexis the Man of God*, and the *Empress Alexandra*[\[182\]](#), in the State Russian Museum, also belongs to the middle of the seventeenth century and shows us the best side of the manner established by Chirin. Very characteristic is the expression of concentrated solemnity upon the face of the Archangel, and the deep faith and earnest prayer upon the faces of the two saints: here again we have the feathery hills, swarms of soft misty green clouds: it is upon these that, cross in hand, the Archangel appears. The dress of Alexis is expressed with deep, engraved lines for the folds, as also the wrinkles upon his wasted face, so that it seems almost like a metal covering. We get a kind of relief and a certain feeling for the underlying body and for nature, more like free painting than pure icon-painting. Even more remarkable are two icons of the Archangels *Michael* and *Gabriel*, part of a *Deesis* with heads only. There is a tracing of this type in the *Siysk Painters' Guide* as a good model to copy. The big, plump head is in a *fryaz'* manner such as the painters of Palëkh have adopted. It is covered with small curls, starting from the swirl at the crown and going apart in waves to the forehead and along the temples and cheeks, right down to the neck like a fine-grained fleece. Only two fillets (*toroki*), or ribbons of the head-band, as it were, escape from this thicket of hair and twist down the

ear. In this head it is not only the way of dressing the hair which is fantastic, but the Archangel's wings are made up of tiny feathers of softest down. Chirin's manner is also to be seen in the very light and 'smoky' fused touch, especially about the cloak. Strange as it may seem at first sight, the fundamental type of these Angels is not to be found in Greek or even in Moldavian icons, but goes back to Italy and the fifteenth century; we find just this treatment of the hair in the masters of Umbría and the North, such as Benedetto Buonfigli (1420-96), or Piero della Francesca (heads of the Prophets, 1454)[\[183\]](#).

The first half of the seventeenth century was by no means the final chapter in the history of Russian icon-painting, as its forms, as worked out by Chirin and some of the other icon-painters to the Tsar, really held their own through the rest of the century and in a definite manner passed on to the painters of Peter's time[\[184\]](#). This tradition was not disturbed by the western tendencies of Simon Ushakóv, who with Bogdán Saltánov and Basil Poznanski[\[185\]](#), forms, as it were, quite a separate streak in the seventeenth-century work. It is not just to say that on the threshold of the eighteenth century Russian art found itself once more in an infantile condition. It is enough to point to the craftsmanship of Moscow and Mstëra which remained for another whole century at its former technical level. It was no case of there remaining merely a 'popular school' and 'provincial wall-painting'.



146. *Mandylion or Holy Face*, 1637-1638.
Egg tempera on wood, 62 x 106 cm.
Panel from the iconostas from the Saint
Come and Saint Damien church, Slovakia.

The Mid 17th Century, Ushakov

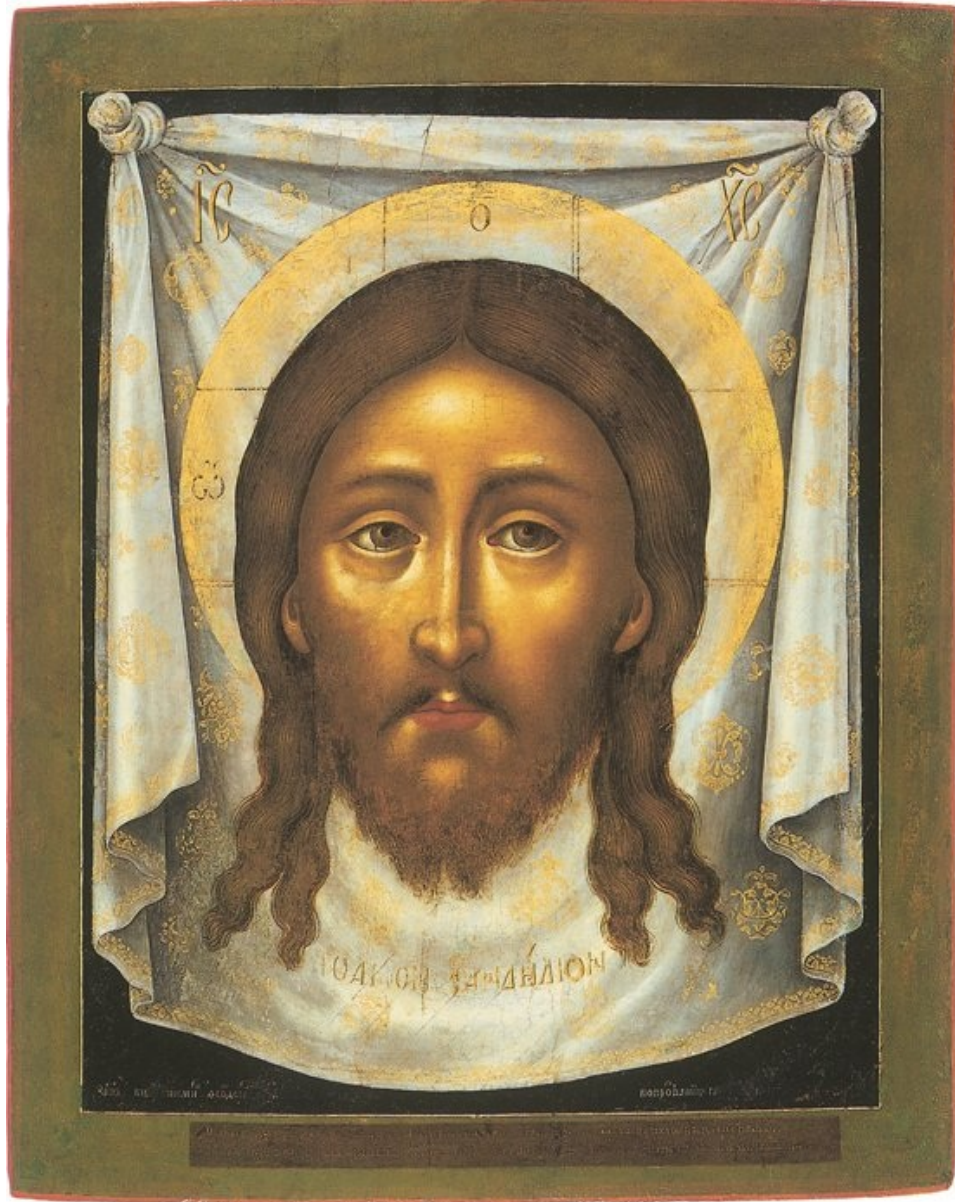
It is not in the least true that, as Muratov says, the Moscow school only arose in the time of Ivan the Terrible and Boris Godunov. We have seen that it began quite two centuries earlier, and had attained real development by the time of Ivan. Still, it is true that in the middle of the seventeenth century the coming decadence was making itself clearly felt and, as usual, they tried to meet it by administrative measures.

To judge rightly of the essence of this sensible decadence, we must reject the customary attempt to base our history on the study of the detailed small-scale work of the best court icon-painters, or those that worked for the Stroganovs. As we admire their skill in design, the brilliant patches of bright and orange-coloured vermilion, their marvellous care in fine work and their very delicate

skill in handling gold hatchings and enrichments, we feel that within its limits there is nothing to criticise, criticism has no place. But, if we turn our attention to the big iconostases which could not be painted wholly by the real masters, even though they bear the signature of Procopius Chirin, we can easily seize what constitutes the decay and what were its essential causes. We have already spoken of the evident faults of drawing and even colouring in the great *Deeds* in the State Russian Museum, signed by Procopius; they reduced themselves to a pupil's exaggeration of effeminacy and prettiness in the movements, gestures and actual folds of the draperies.

If, however, we turn to a great *chef-d'œuvre* of the time, the iconostas in the church of the Miracle of St. Michael in the Chudov monastery in the Kremlin, we shall find another kind of failing[\[186\]](#). The artist affects a particular refinement and complication in his way of doing folds: the garments of the Patriarchs and Prophets appear to be made of the thinnest silk stuffs, so tiny are the folds which surround their shoulders, breasts and loins; they flutter round their legs, but are held by some miracle in crossing knots under their knees and about their arms. With all this, the fundamental drawing or scheme of the clothes is the Byzantine, only the painter has complicated them to such an extent with hatching that he gets knots and lumps of folds surrounding the neck and arms. It is clear that he is trying to get the effect of free painting, but has not the skill to attain it and finds himself entangled.

The same happens to the heads and extremities of the figures. The painter only has a general scheme, and as the figure leans forward more than it did, and is even quite bent in order to add to its expressiveness and life, he has not been able to place the head upon the bent neck. Thus, he cannot fit the foot to the bent leg, and makes it touch the ground like a dancing-girl's, with the toes only.



147. Simon Ushakov, *Mandylion or Holy Face*, 1678.
53 x 42 cm. From the town of Smolensk, Russia.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

In other words, the age was asking for free representation, being already acquainted with it, but the icon-painter was not master of the means to attain it and tried to make up by complicating the methods of icon-painting. But if the Frankish style (*fryaz'*) is now getting the better of icon-painting, it is still confined to the tiny detailed work which can tolerate absolutely chaotic composition and an elongated and formless drawing. In an iconostas this cannot be allowed. This is one reason for the strong taste for tiny work and also the

beginning of decay.

The same thing happens with the setting, the mountains, and buildings. The artists strive after naturalism and free painting and try and bring life in by representing the churches and new buildings of Moscow, but have neither the skill in observation nor in drawing required for such naturalism. The result is fantastic churches with dozens of gables and merlons, buildings with figures in niches or upon stages all about them. The rocks turn into shrubs, scattered over the hills. The trouble is not so much that in 1652 Spyridon Timoféev sets his *Annunciation*[\[187\]](#) against buildings of absolutely baroque architecture, as it is in the senseless piling up of colonnades within open porticoes, of parapets and stairs on the top of buildings set upon the summits of shaly rocks. Muratov is quite right when he says that 'in such icons the main thing is no longer in what is represented, but in the enrichments and patterns, the elaborate shale of the ground and the excessively detailed drawing' of star-like flowers upon their stalks, in curls, and tiny clouds filling the grey-blue vault of heaven. Yet at this time in many unsigned works of the second half of the seventeenth century, while the drawing is swollen and the faces puffy, we find wonderfully soft half-tones, buff, orange, smoky *prazelen*', black Venetian velvet and delightful work in liquid gold. It must be admitted that this gold shading often entirely veils the colours, and the icon seems shrouded in a dead metal covering. This brings us to the figure of the Virgin in the work of Procopius Chirin and his pupils. At the same time, under western influence, the flesh colour assumes the look of ivory (e.g. the icon of *S. Nicholas* in the church of the Twelve Apostles in the Kremlin). There begins a competition between icon-painting and the free painting which was practised along side it, with its direct copying of nature and varied forms of expression. Icon-painting had to satisfy new demands, to paint portraits of donors upon the icons themselves, and this discord and want of clear understanding was fatal to the career of Simon Ushakov.

Simon Ushakov (1626-86) suffered the full the effects of differences of opinion and practice which disturbed and divided the craft of icon-painting upon the question of following the ancient tradition or making use of western religious models and western painting[\[188\]](#). The chief examples of his art are preserved in the church of Our Lady of Georgia, by the Varvára Gates in the corner of the Kitáy Górod, built 1657-68[\[189\]](#). The church was rebuilt in honour of the icon of Our Lady of Georgia, which, being a copy of the miraculous icon venerated in the monastery of Krásnaya Gorá near Archangel, itself performed miracles during the plague of 1654: and the church, formerly dedicated to S. Nicetas the Martyr, took the name of the icon. The attribution of the iconostas in this church to Simon Ushakov is uncertain, busy as he always was with a multitude of tasks:

the general artistic effect, apart from the separate icons, does not suggest a skilled designer.

An icon of *Our Lady of Vladimir*, painted by Ushakov in the shape of a small oval, gives us a free copy of the miraculous picture in the Uspenski Sobor, set within an ornamental genealogical tree bearing twenty roundels (*kley mó*) with tiny half-lengths of the saints of the Orthodox Church in Russia: Sergius, his pupils Nikon, Savas, Andronicus, Simon, Paphnutius, the Moscow Metropolitans Alexis, Jonas, Philip, Philaret, etc., Below, by the walls of the Moscow Kremlin, Peter the Metropolitan and Ivan Kalita are planting the tree. In front stands Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich and his family^[190]. On the artistic side, the icon presents many novelties after the manner of the medieval westerners. It is full of scrolls in the hands of the saints, and these do not in the least agree with the lively painting of the figures which have freed themselves from medieval placing: these scrolls are specially strange in the hands of the naked saints Maxim and Basil the Fools^[191]. Further, I can by no means agree with Filimonov's judgement. There is no Russian icon to which I can point as a more successful rendering of the Virgin's face', yet Filimonov well knew the face of the miraculous icon in the Uspenski Sobor, so wonderful in the deep sadness of its expression. Ushakov changed this to one of gladness, a very strange modification of a fundamental characteristic of the face. Besides this he made the eyes unnaturally large and the outline a wide oval, so bringing it near to the type of Our Lady of Georgia, neither suitable nor successful in a rendering of Our Lady of Vladimir.



148. *The Virgin of Smolensk "Chouïskaïa"*,
end of the 17th century. 110.5 x 96 cm.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



149. Ivan Mikhailov, *The Virgin of Vladimirskaya*, 1697.
101 x 73 cm. From the tier of iconostasis in
the Church of Saint Sophia in Moscow.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

An icon similar to this is that of *Our Lord the Great High Priest*[\[192\]](#), painted on a polygonal panel to go in the middle of nine round icons (2 ft. across) with the *Teachers of the Oecumenical Church*. Both represent a new way of composing the lowest tier of an iconostas, instead of the so-called ‘fixed’ icons. The idea of such a tier is apparently to set before the assembly of the faithful great figures of Christ and of the Virgin with the Child, visible at a distance,

likewise the chief Festivals, or events of the Gospel story, to the memory of which the church is dedicated. But there now enters in a new didactic purpose and this has something of a Lutheran tinge. The arrangement is clearly unsuccessful, if only because such icons two feet high are not big enough to be seen among the fixed icons, and so the old and natural scheme of big fixed icons is abolished without any advantage. Further, these icons are merely cold and formal and no use at all to bring worshippers into a devotional mood.

Finally, the figures of these teachers, Dionysius, Cyril, Epiphanius, Gregory of Nysa, James, Ambrose, Ignatius, Gregory of Neocaesarea, and Athanasius, in the attempt to make them full of pictorial majesty and iconic piety, have lost almost all the marked individuality of the Byzantine models. They are less like icons than like the paintings executed by the academic painters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for the cathedrals of Petersburg and Moscow. All these pious heads have essentially the same faces; most of them even the same beards, full, wavy, and carefully combed. Some of these teachers with their prominent eyes have a kind of naïve look quite unsuitable to a Father of the Church.

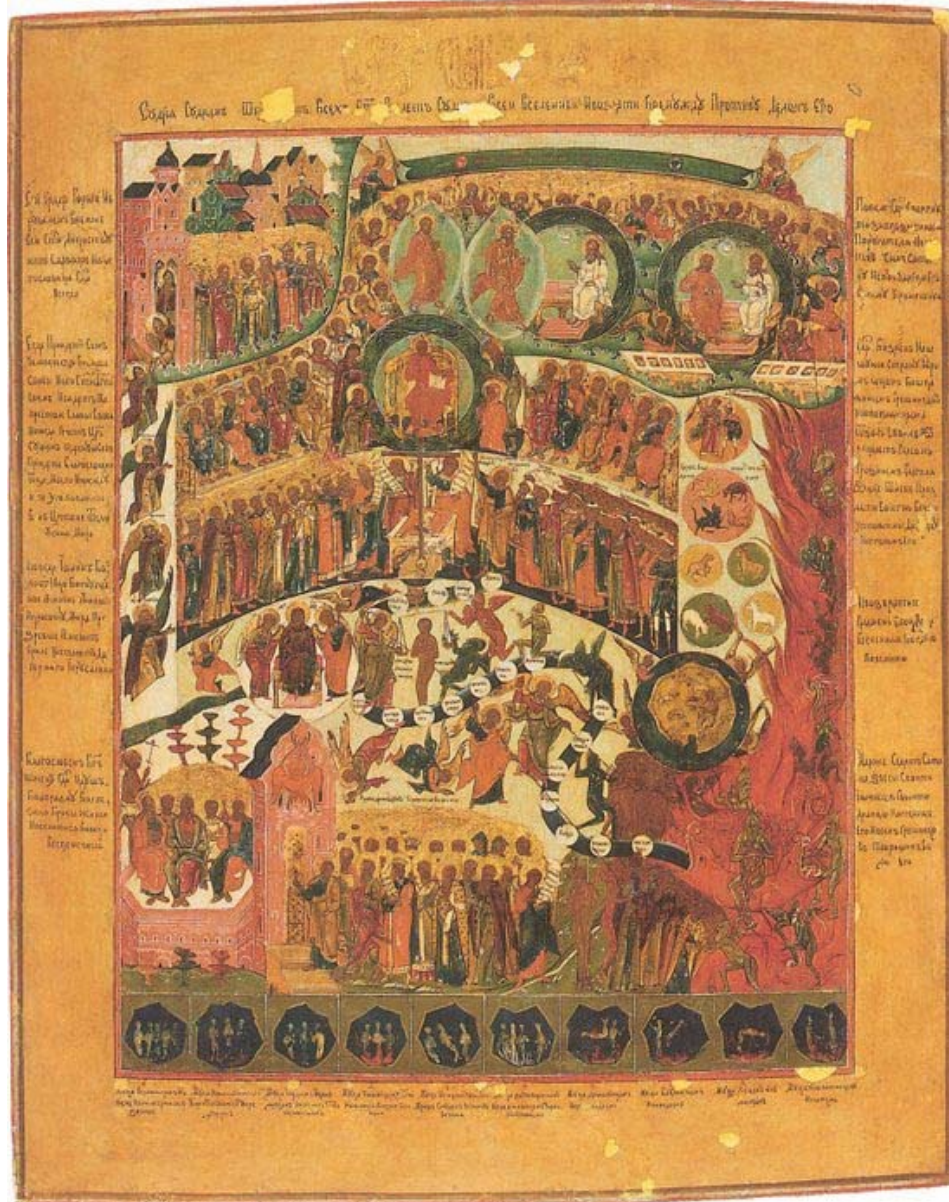
Upon analysis of this new style, we find first that all the scenes taken from the anthem were freshly designed and have a typical composition common to them all. This aims at remodelling the old plastic design, like that of a bas-relief, to make it picturesque. In principle this picturesque manner was no novelty in the second half of the seventeenth century; we know it from all the Western attempts to transfer iconographic compositions to free painting. Meanwhile there were similar cases in Russian icon-painting. The icon of *The Saving of Novgorod* when attacked by the men of Súzdaľ was painted quite in the form of a free picture as far as an icon-painter could do so [\[193\]](#). Above on the right is the city upon a hill, down from it towards the left starts a procession with the icon of the Virgin towards a stream, which can still be seen under the walls of the Sophia Side of Nóvgorod. Beyond the stream the enemy is already retreating before the forces of Nóvgorod.

This same manner of arranging the composition in a hilly landscape with movement downwards to left or right was also used by Ushakóv and his fellows, or else the action is performed by groups up and down the hill, or in several tiers, the arrangement for the Saints who stand before Christ's picture in the heavens, or the Holy Bishops before the figure of the Virgin within the hallowed assembly (*sobór*). So in this case, the composition on the first subject, 'To the Leader that fought for me', celebrating the deliverance of Constantinople from the Persians shows the city above, and winds down hill in a spiral, first to the left and then to the sea on the right where the Avars are drowning. The next two scenes illustrate *kontakia* after the iconic scheme; the fourth is set in a hilly

landscape; the sixth likewise has a landscape, below within a building Herod is receiving the Magi, above they are riding homewards. Further, the shapes of the hills remain the same, but their shaly ledges are made like fanciful shrubs or stone battlements. The buildings are partly changed into the Western type of roomy halls and temples upon tall thin columns with *loggie* and rows of arches. Walls have rows of towers of the north Italian type like the towers of the Kremlin[\[194\]](#), with many storeys ending in a spire or *glavá*. The simple churches are transfigured into the fanciful many-domed type of Vasili Blazhenny. In everything, the decorative side is insisted upon both in the accessories and in the clothes. This makes the iconic incorrectness of the figures in motion stand out all the more, the angular folds, excessively thin limbs, and all the typical faults of late icons demoralized by *fryaz*.



150. *The Virgin of Elets*, 1700-1703.
Museum of Fine Arts, Tchernigov, Ukraine.



151. *The Last Judgement*, 17th century.
53 x 42 cm. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

And yet Ushakov certainly was an icon-painter of exceptional talent: this talent he applied to the study of free painting and design. That which he achieved in this new field we see in his freely painted icons of the *Vernide*, and in general his heads of Jesus. For icons of Christ, Moscow received from Súzdaľ' exalted models and the very finest traditions. We have already mentioned the great head of Christ at the Rogozhski cemetery, and the miraculous icon placed by S. Alexis in the Andronikov monastery of Our Saviour; we cannot deny to the

icon of Christ in the Novospasski monastery a certain impressive severity of its own, and so with *Our Saviour of the Burning Eye* (*Yároe Óko*) in the Uspenski Cathedral, to say nothing of others in the churches and monasteries of Moscow^[195]. The *Deesis* again, either simple or enlarged, included a representation of Christ which, in both type and composition, went back to Rublëv and was in favour not only in the schools of Moscow and Súzdal', but also served invariably as the model for the Nóvgorod painters. But at this point the development stopped. So much so that the figure of Christ in the Pereyasláv Gospels, painted in the early part of the fifteenth century, is unsurpassed in drawing, colour, and expression. It is merely repeated by all the Muscovite and Stroganov schools in a way which seems, as it were, blunted and worn. If one should seek to characterize the type of the 'Russian Saviour', its only feature is sheer want of character.

Among icons of *Our Saviour* a special place certainly belongs to that created by Simon Ushakóv (d.1686) and often repeated by him; his pupils and contemporaries reproduced it everywhere, and though of course they distorted it and treated it in the iconic fashion, still it remains a remarkable production of Moscow icon-painting. But the fact is this icon has passed beyond the bounds of icon-painting, and the best icons of *Our Saviour* from the hand of Simon Ushakóv are executed in the manner of ordinary pictures and belongs to the history of Russian picture painting. These icons are painted after study of the early Flemish models; there is one in the Trinity Cathedral of the Sergius Lavra, and a replica in the church of Our Lady of Georgia at Moscow. After this comes a whole series of imitations of the type that are all more or less inferior, some like this *Vernicles*, others half-lengths of *Our Lord Blessing*, and even in a *Resurrection* by the later master Cyril Ulánov in the State Russian Museum. From all these replicas and imitations we get the impression of a type most exactly suitable for a *Vernicle*; a perfect narrow oval for the face as a whole, regular features, a severely serious expression of profound calm show us a Saviour thinking high thoughts of sympathy for suffering humanity. Of all so-called academic types of Christ, Ushakóv's is the one we can best accept: it fully stands comparison with the western types, to which indeed Ushakóv is much indebted: the fine nose is still Greek, but from the west he took the quiet straight line of the thick brows and the balanced unruffled forehead suggesting a nature above that of man: likewise the mild dark chestnut eyes with a touch of sadness in them from the raised lower lid; truly the eyes of the suffering Christ upon the *Vernicle*. But this icon and its companion *S. John* prove clearly that Simon Ushakóv was on the right track when he turned to the west and there sought for his talent new ideals and new thoughts, breaking down the middle wall of

partition which imprisoned Russian life and Russian orthodoxy in the time of Nikon. In his admiration for European art he lived in the faith and hope that he would come out of darkness and chaos into light.

A special point about Ushakov is that he not only drew the whole compositions (as *zndmeshchik*) but also the faces (as *líchnik*). In the icon of the *Annunciation* in Our Lady of Georgia's Church, he only did the faces (and not many of them) in conjunction with Kondrátiiev and Kazánets, according to the inscription on the escutcheon below. Accordingly, the chief faces in that icon, Christ, the Virgin and the Angels, clearly repeat the ideal type of his Saviour in modelling, pallor, softness, and expression.

Ushakov was enough of a seventeenth-century man to practise etching, or at any rate to prepare designs for etchings. There is a famous one of the *Seven Deadly Sins*, and a dignified rendering of the *New Testament Trinity*, the Father and Son enthroned with the Dove, also called *Otechestvo* or *Paternity*.

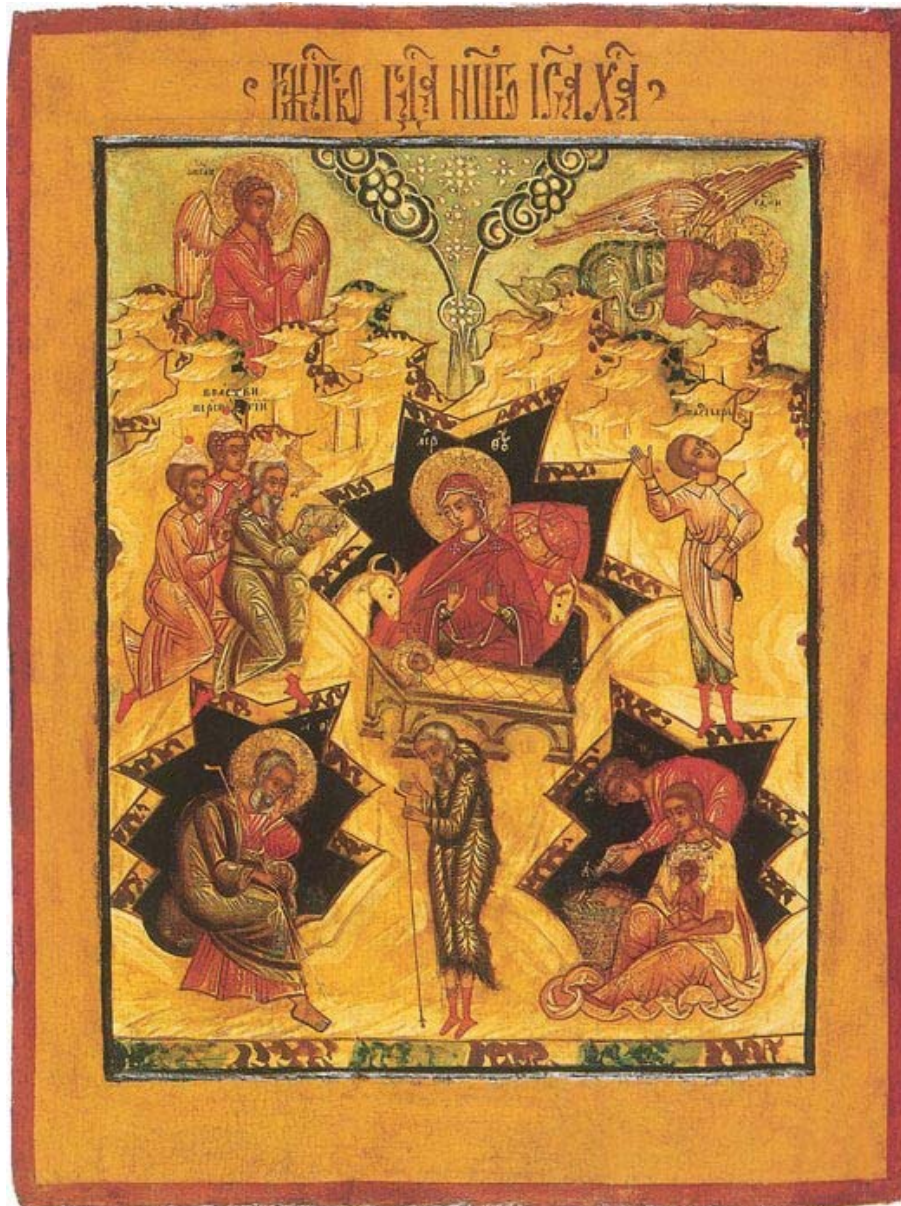
But the ordinary icon-painter tended to relapse into almost childish *naïveté*. The story of the murder of Demetrius, the younger son of Ivan the Terrible, was given in full detail in the chronicle and these details are set one after the other in the familiar hilly landscape: the icon is entitled *The Picture of the Holy Tsarevich Demetrius*. Above we have the young prince with the cross and palm of martyrdom looking up towards Christ; below is written 'Demetrius the Tsarevich was slain at Uglich at the order of Boris Godunov by Nikita Kachalov and Daniel Batyagovski in 1591, the eighth year of his birth. He was stabbed with a knife; his relics were brought from Uglich to the Royal City of Moscow during the reign of Vasili Ioánnovich in the first year of his reign under the Most Holy Patriarch Hermogenes. Likewise, in the first year of his Patriarchate; his relics were laid in the Cathedral Church of the Dread Leader of the Heavenly Hosts Michael the Archistrategé.'

The action begins at the left. 'The murderers came to the Tsarevich Demetrius;' 'They stab him;' 'His mother falls upon his body;' 'The nurse [who was in the plot] weeps for him.' 'The church ringers sound the alarm.' 'The murderers try to break in the belfry door;' 'Nikita Kachalov;' 'Daniel Batyagovski.' 'The murderers mounted and rode away from the town, but lost their way and came back to the town;' 'The people began to strike the murderers in the face.' There is a delightful view of the 'Town of Uglich.' This copy is in the State Russian Museum, and belongs to the eighteenth century.

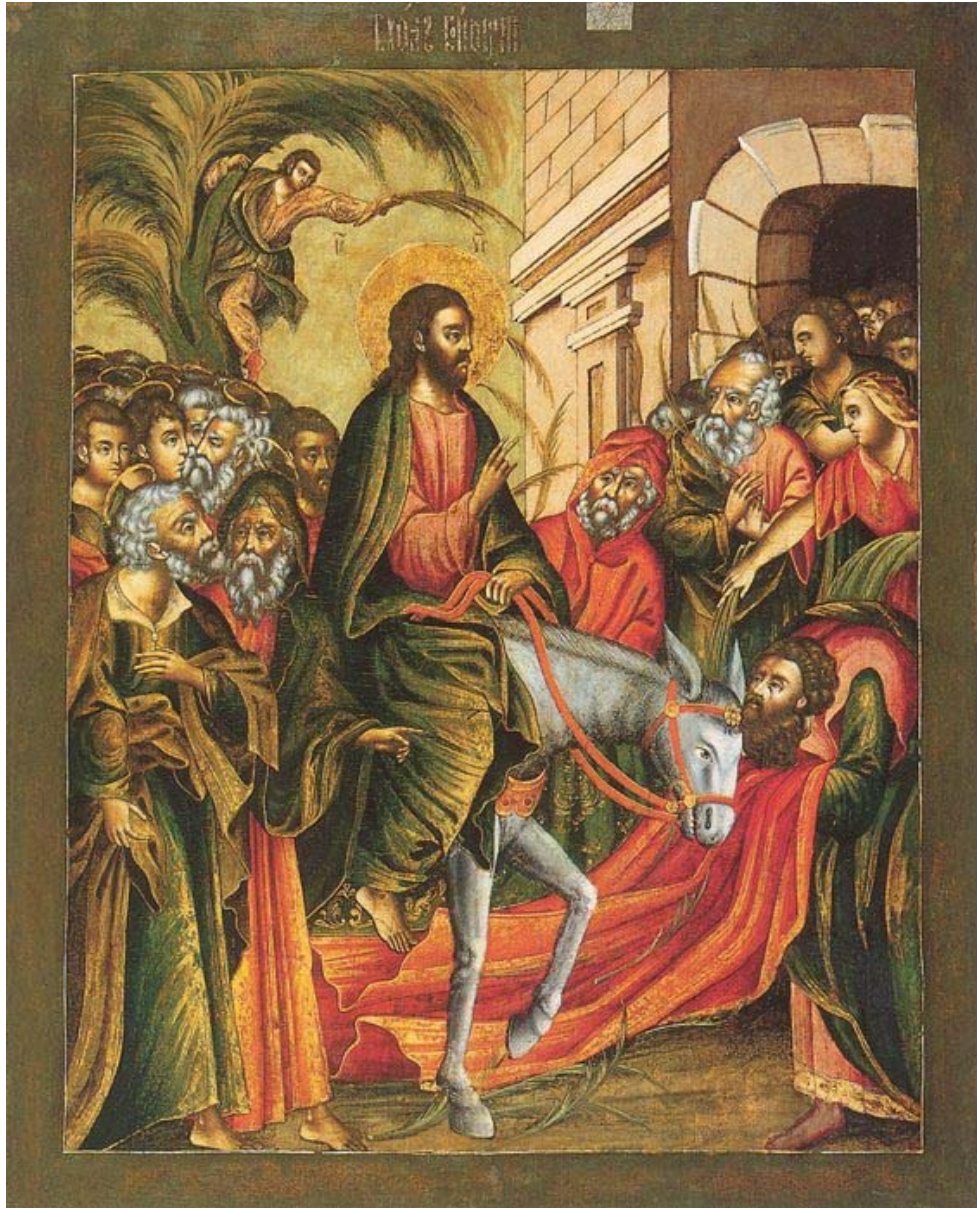
The Late 17th Century, Decadence

Our account of Russian icon-painting in the seventeenth century is supplemented by the buildings of Rostóv the Great, Yaroslávl', Kostromá, and Romanov-Borisoglêbsk, industrial and commercial towns to the north-east of Moscow, in which the traders small and great vied with each other in gifts for the glorifying of the churches. A great fire at Yaroslávl' in 1658 made room for work upon a whole series of wonderful churches with their wall-paintings, which continued until 1701. Most remarkable are the churches of S. Elias the Prophet and S. John the Baptist in the suburb of Tolchkovo. Outside they are adorned with fantastic architectural decoration and faience tiles, inside with bright frescoes, in which the whole technique of painting icons upon panels and its dark colouring, in which red is much too prominent, is transferred to the walls.

The evident decay in art and skill is exemplified here by the crowded painting. The frescoes are in eight tiers divided into innumerable little panels forming a chaos of disparate scenes in bright and harsh colours. The walls of S. John the Baptist surpass in its multitudes the famous church at Salamis with its 3,724 figures painted in a. D. 1735. Likewise, the variety of the subjects surpasses the Greeks, as the Russian painters were even more given to copying western prints, and in S. John's Church there is no surface at all without painting, even the doors and the splays of the windows are covered with figures. There is no need to be astonished at this abundance, we find almost the same at Rostov, Kostromá, Vólogda, Romanov-Borisoglêbsk and other towns, of course, at less expense and on a smaller scale. Hundreds of hands had gained the necessary skill in the big workshops of the commercial towns, and even in country places and mere villages, such as survive in the well-known villages of the province of Vladimir, Mstëra, Khóluy, and Palëkh.



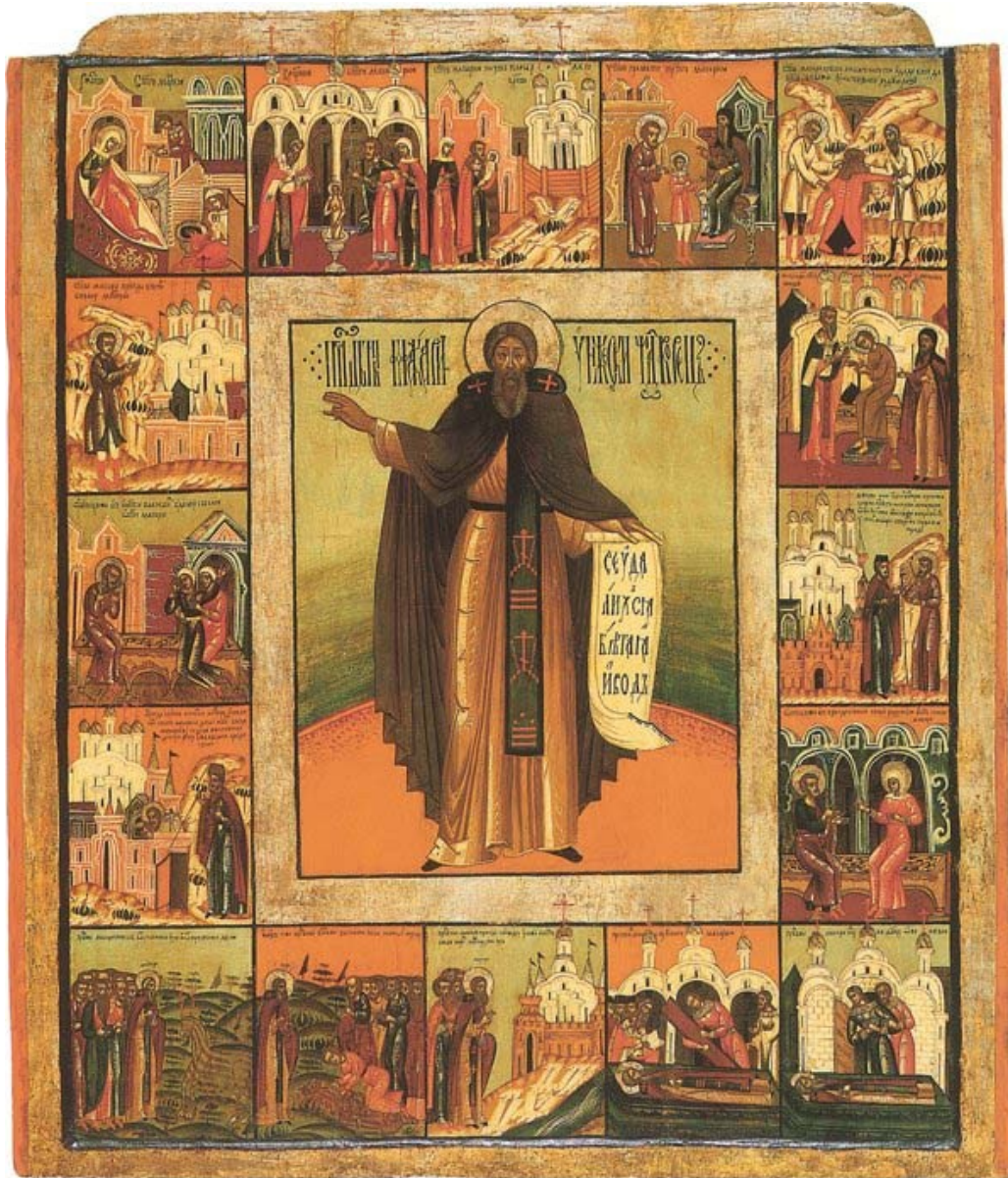
152. *The Nativity of Christ*, North Russia, end of the 17th century to the beginning of the 18th century. 55 x 43.5 cm. Village of Spirovo, St. Petersburg region. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



153. Workshops of the Armoury of the Moscow Kremlin,
The Entry into Jerusalem, end of the 17th century
to the beginning of the 18th century. Feasts tier
from the iconstasis in the Church of the Presentation,
Barachi, Moscow. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.



154. Workshops of the Armoury of the Moscow Kremlin,
The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, end of the 17th century to the beginning of the 18th century. 77 x 68 cm.
Feasts tier from the iconstasis in the Church of the Presentation, Barachi, Moscow. The State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow.



155. *Saint Macaire Ounjenski with Scenes from His Life*, Kostroma, end of the 17th century to the beginning of the 18th century. From the village of Pochinok, Kostroma region, Russia. The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

For us the most interesting part of these great schemes of frescoes is not, as formerly, the most important and showy part within the central church itself, but the painting of the porches and passages leading up to it. In the Greek and south Russian monasteries, canvas with subjects painted in oil upon it was hung or nailed to the walls of such passages. North Russia painted directly upon the wall

themes such as *Old Testament Story*, edifying histories from the *Lives of the Saints*, or from so-called *Limonaria* (after the fashion of the *Leimon* or meadow) of John Moschus, or 'Flower gardens', stories of the lives of the eastern eremites, selected lives of saints, the *Apocalypse*, *Last Judgement*, *Our Lord's Passion*, the *Akathist of Our Lady*, *In thee Rejoiceth*, *Wisdom hath builded her house* and suchlike. But with all this variety of subject the walls of the churches and corridors everywhere offer infinite repetition of stock motives, both in the compositions and in the buildings, churches, figures, hills. So too in the church, the chief subjects are surmounted in the apse by edifying compositions to explain the *Liturgy* (i.e. the Mass), on the west wall by illustrations of the *Song of Songs*. But for the inscriptions, the most careful examination would not enable us to make out meaning; in the symbolical scenes and interpretations of the Liturgy, why and at what moment we see the Priest at the altar, the Deacon at the Royal Doors, and Angels all round quite close; the Child Christ standing within the Chalice, the Great Entry, and close by an Angel by the altar striking a demon. The whole cycle depends on the arrangement of the Liturgy made by Gregory the Great, and illustrates the words which answer to our 'Therefore with Angels and Archangels' and the *Trisagion*. The scene of the Devil being struck belongs to the moment when the Deacon bids the catechumens withdraw^[196].

For icons painted upon panels these iconographic inventions were fatal, coming just at the very end of their development. The fact is that all these complicated imaginations had a certain use and excuse in monasteries, where they served as concrete and perpetual sermons for the monks who, spending the greater part of the day in church, had time to study all that they offered. The Russian Church adopted part of the monastic services even for lay folk, and spread out this matter upon the walls of the churches. Finally, zeal for ecclesiastical decoration transferred to panels all this selection of themes, and required their execution in the detailed style with innumerable figures.

In the church of S. Gregory of Neocaesarea, at Moscow, there is preserved a whole series of icons painted in 1668-1669 by the Pupils or school of Ushakóv and the Yaroslávl' masters, and setting forth the edifying themes *Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord*, *The Archangels Gabriel and Michael* with scrolls, *Father, glorify thy Son*, to illustrate Ps. xlix, lxxxi, cxlix, *Let God arise*, in eleven scenes, an icon of *The Seven Sacraments*, *The Ten Commandments*, *The Trinity*, *The Joy of all that Grieve* (the Virgin), the *Akathist*, and suchlike.

A hundred years before, the strictly Orthodox were offended at the novelties in such themes as the *Trinity*, *It is meet and right*, the *Creed*, *Wisdom*, *God rested on the Seventh Day*, *The Only-begotten Son*, for which Greek models could be produced. Infinitely more so did the complicated new compositions,

tacked on to a new selection of texts from scripture or canticles, give opportunities for finding lapses from Orthodoxy into Latinism. Of course, any borrowing from Latinism seemed dangerous, even though it were a matter of something older than the schism. The clergy's general ignorance of religious art spread this general principle on both sides of the line, and instilled fear of sin in case of any borrowing. We have quite clearly proved that Greek icon-painting had itself, ever since the fourteenth century, entered into close relations with the Italian school, and in the middle of the seventeenth century its idea of ancient tradition was Venetian icon-painting. So the Patriarch Nikon, in his search for ancient Greek models, vainly asked help of the Greeks. The Greeks themselves by now did not know of such an elementary thing as the blessing with two fingers, evidently the usual one in the early Church up to the ninth century. They declared it to be incorrect, whereas the Old Believers were quite right when they pointed to many ancient icons, especially icons of Christ, in which this form of blessing was still represented.

In connexion with Nikon's reform of the Slavonic service-books which began in 1655, were published fresh demands for a strict watch against novelties in icon-painting. Paul of Aleppo gives us very interesting information as to Nikon's attack upon 'new icons drawn after the fashion of Frankish and Polish pictures', and his own comments are valuable. He says that Nikon was devoted to the Greek models but, at the same time, was exceedingly self-willed. He ordered all newfangled icons to be collected and brought to him, wherever they might be, even from the houses of high officials. He put out the eyes of the icons and the *strêltsy* (Tsar's body-guard) bore them round the town proclaiming that any one who should henceforward paint such icons should suffer exemplary punishment.

The Old Believers claimed to be the true venerators of ancient icons, before all of Greek examples, and at the same time Nikon and his followers were protesting against novelties in icon-painting, and seeking to correct the icons, as well as the books, in accordance with the best Greek models. Both sides aimed for the same goal and defending ancient piety went farther than they meant in controversy. The Archpriest Awakum[\[197\]](#) accused the other side of heresy, and, finding himself in the heat of battle, sought the most far-fetched expressions of the most refined theological dogma and thereby distorted the strict system of theological thought. His opponents anathematised him for founding his schism upon this distortion. There was no real question of iconoclasm on the Orthodox side in the seventeenth century, but Awakum and the Old Believers made as though the whole matter of venerating icons were at stake; they refuted 'Lutherans and Calvinists' and repeated all the old commonplaces, setting forth their own true and ancient faith in order to cast upon the other side the suspicion

of novelty and want of Orthodoxy. The Old Believers and Schismatics ascribed to the Nikon party the very novelties in icon-painting, and the very tendency towards ordinary painting and naturalism that Nikon himself had attacked when he dashed to pieces the new icons with their 'unbecoming' painting. They made out that the rather plump figure of Emmanuel was 'invented by Nikon the enemy as if there were lively likenesses of Christ and the Virgin after the *fryaz*', that is, the German.' Awakum even went so far as himself to invent various extravagances and absurdities, such as Christ with a beard at his Nativity, the Virgin pregnant at the Annunciation, Christ with full draperies upon the cross, as being found among the pagan Franks. He used these dishonest means to dissuade his followers from having anything to do with the heretics.

Awakum maintained the saints of God must be represented by a pious painter as thin and emaciated, not fat and well-liking. Finally, the Old Believers came to bitter contention as to whether icons which were brought from the houses of Nikonians could still be rightly revered.

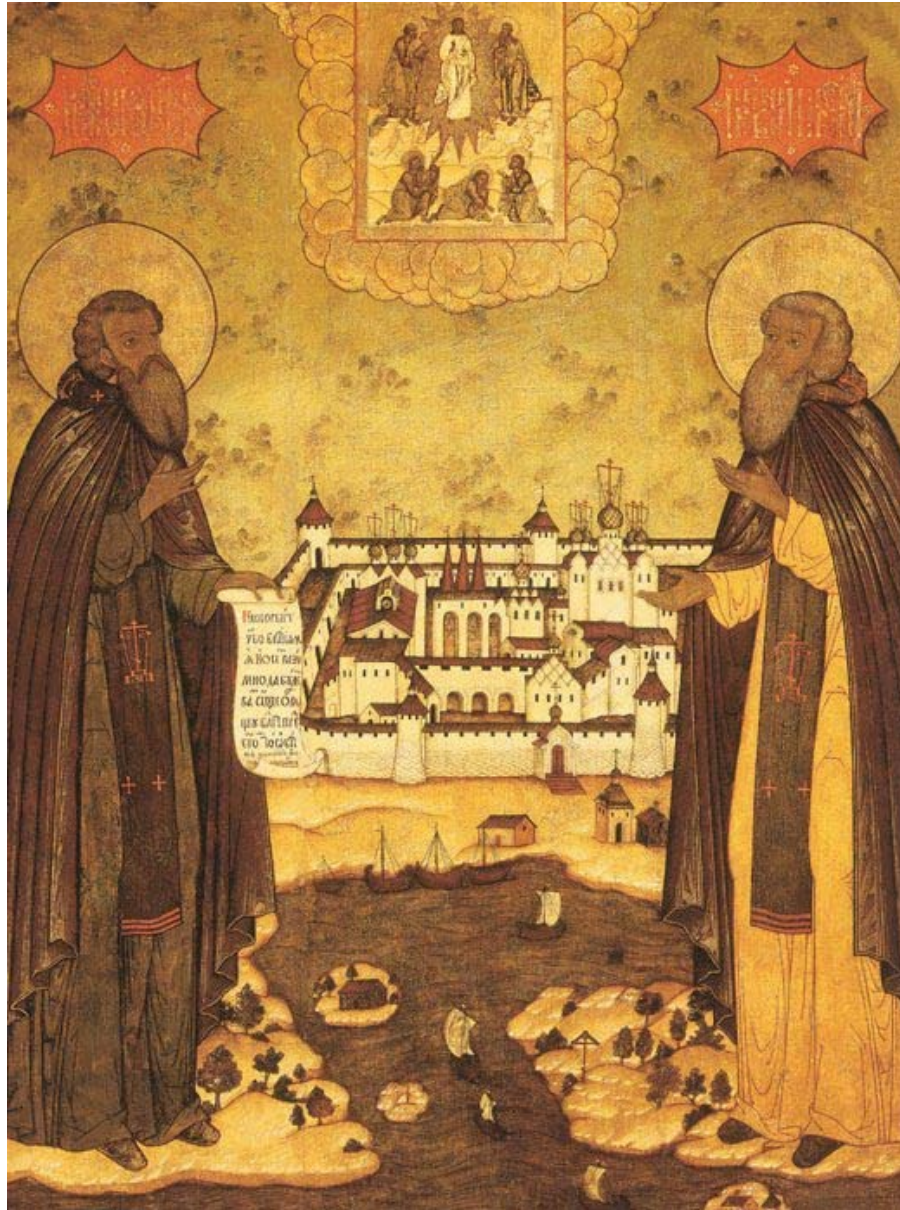
One result is clear. In spite of borrowings from German prints and southern Russian paintings, and the tendency to small-scale work, and, even in spite of the oscillation of taste between icons and ordinary pictures, Russian icon-painting in the seventeenth century was still living a rich and interesting life. However, this life had ceased to develop artistic form, and was confined to the enrichment of its content, for so much on the side of form had been adopted during the previous century, and time was needed for it to be worked out, and on the side of content much of interest had come in. Along with it had of course been picked up much swollen and empty rhetoric. There were compositions thrown together out of all kinds of old material, but much was still fresh and truly instructive.

The *Vernicle* was now painted *v litsakh* with a visible explanation, so likewise *Our Lord as Pantocrator* was painted *v litsakh*. New subjects were *The All-seeing Eye of the Lord* or the *Coal of Isaiah the Prophet*, *He shone from the Virgin Womb*. The basis of this composition was the *Burning Bush*; below upon the earth they figured Isaiah and Ezekiel, the Virgin standing, the disk of the sun in a circle and in it Emmanuel^[198]. They painted icons of *The Embrace of the Father*, *Eructavit cor meum*, and other complicated themes: a good instance is the *Paternoster*^[199] in scenes summing up all Christian spiritual life: it begins with the *Fatherhood*; for 'Hallowed be Thy name' we have a view of a service in church; for 'Thy kingdom come', Tsar, citizens and people, the heavenly kingdom typified by the earthly; for 'Thy will be done' Christ carrying His Cross and two young men taking up their crosses; 'Give us this day our daily bread' is shown by a monastic refectory with beggars receiving their share, and so on. By this time the practice of painting on a small scale made it possible for a

private person to gather into his own possession the fullest and most elaborate forms of *The Praise of Our Lady*, *The Assembly of Our Lady*, the *Descent of the Holy Spirit*, the *Raising of Lazarus*, and the icons of *Our Lady of Vladimir*, *Kazan*, with all the miracles they had wrought.



156. Private Iconostasis, School of Palech,
19th century. Icon Museum, Recklinghausen, Germany.



157. *The Saints Savvatiy and Zossime from Solovki*,
18th century. Museum of History of Moscow, Moscow.

From the end of the sixteenth century the *Apocalypse* grew into great favour, both as a subject for icons and still more in illuminated manuscripts: the reading of it took the place of the psalter as an occupation peculiarly acceptable to God^[200]. It was indeed a difficult task for the icon-painters to get the *Apocalypse* on to the small devotional icons or triptychs, especially as the centre-piece of the latter was taken up by the *Last Judgement*. The general position of the *Apocalypse* in Christian art is complicated: in the early period,

particularly at Rome, Apocalyptic subjects such as the four and twenty Elders before the Lamb, the Four Horsemen, the Four Beasts, and suchlike, were actually popular and illustrated Apocalypses appeared in the west as soon as the eleventh or twelfth centuries, but Byzantium paid little attention to this book and its pictures. It is not until the sixteenth century that we get wall-pictures of it on Mount Athos, and then only in two compositions in the porches or refectories, or later on the west wall of a church and in its corridors.

Of course, there were earlier Greek frescoes of Apocalyptic scenes, but they have not descended to us. The fact is that the allegorical sense of the pictures that make up the Apocalypse hardly lends itself to static representation, and can hardly be understood without inscriptions. Also Greek feeling was against the literal reproduction which satisfied the barbarous taste of the west up to the eleventh century. Once illustrations of the Apocalypse came into being the icon-painters were compelled to put together, first on the great wall-icons, and then on the small ones for private devotion, more than forty compartments answering to the scenes of Revelation. They could not do this by grouping them in a few hilly landscapes, because the action goes on in various places and the figures are also various. Accordingly they had to divide it into twelve tiers each with many tiny compartments. We can easily see how such scenes led to the fashion for small-scale painting, and how far beyond the resources of icon-painting was the naturalistic presentation of eclipses, earthquakes, the bloody hail, signs in the sky, the destruction of Babylon and the whole world. Such subjects reinforced the movement towards *fryaz'* and ordinary painting. These difficulties, and the extreme complication of Apocalyptic illustrations, made such icons rare and pious people had recourse to illustrated manuscripts, many of which were produced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and held their own among the Old Believers until very recently.

For the most part, an icon of the Last Judgement was sufficient and on comparatively small panels or triptychs so that the scale was always tiny. It is characteristic that Nóvgorod delighted in Last Judgements full of brilliant colour with elegant adornments upon the vestments of Holy Bishops, Martyrs, and Confessors, while Moscow preferred a more severe type and restrained colour; the Apocalypse and the Last Judgement lead on to the representations of life after death. Eschatology played a great part from the thirteenth century, especially in illuminated manuscripts describing the *Life of S. Nephon* with his visions[201], the *Life of S. Basil the New*[202], and *How Our Lady went round to see the tortures of the Damned*[203]. *Synodica* were in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries among the most widely spread popular books in Russia. The nucleus of these was a list of the departed for whom persons of a given family

were bound to pray, both names of people great in Church and State and members of the family. To these were added accounts dealing with the future life, legends of saints, biblical stories in various forms, and various edifying matter drawn both from Greek and from Western sources[204].

All these manuscripts of *Lives of Saints* and *Synodica* were illustrated by icon-painters, though the technique was mostly watercolour, rarely in tempera, and the tints pale, still the manner was essentially that of icon-painting. In the eighteenth century this manner became very careless, approaching the way in which cheap engravings were coloured by hand. The drawings became hopelessly monotonous, mere repetitions and the painters took to colouring only a part of the figures, so that the manuscripts look as if they were only just begun. For all this, the manuscripts have a certain importance for icon-painting, as many subjects first appear in manuscripts, and are then transferred to panels. But the difference is that icons do not merely seek to edify like the manuscripts and cheap prints but should also produce a prayerful state of mind, so they ought to avoid a too elaborately narrative form with excessive detail and repetition.

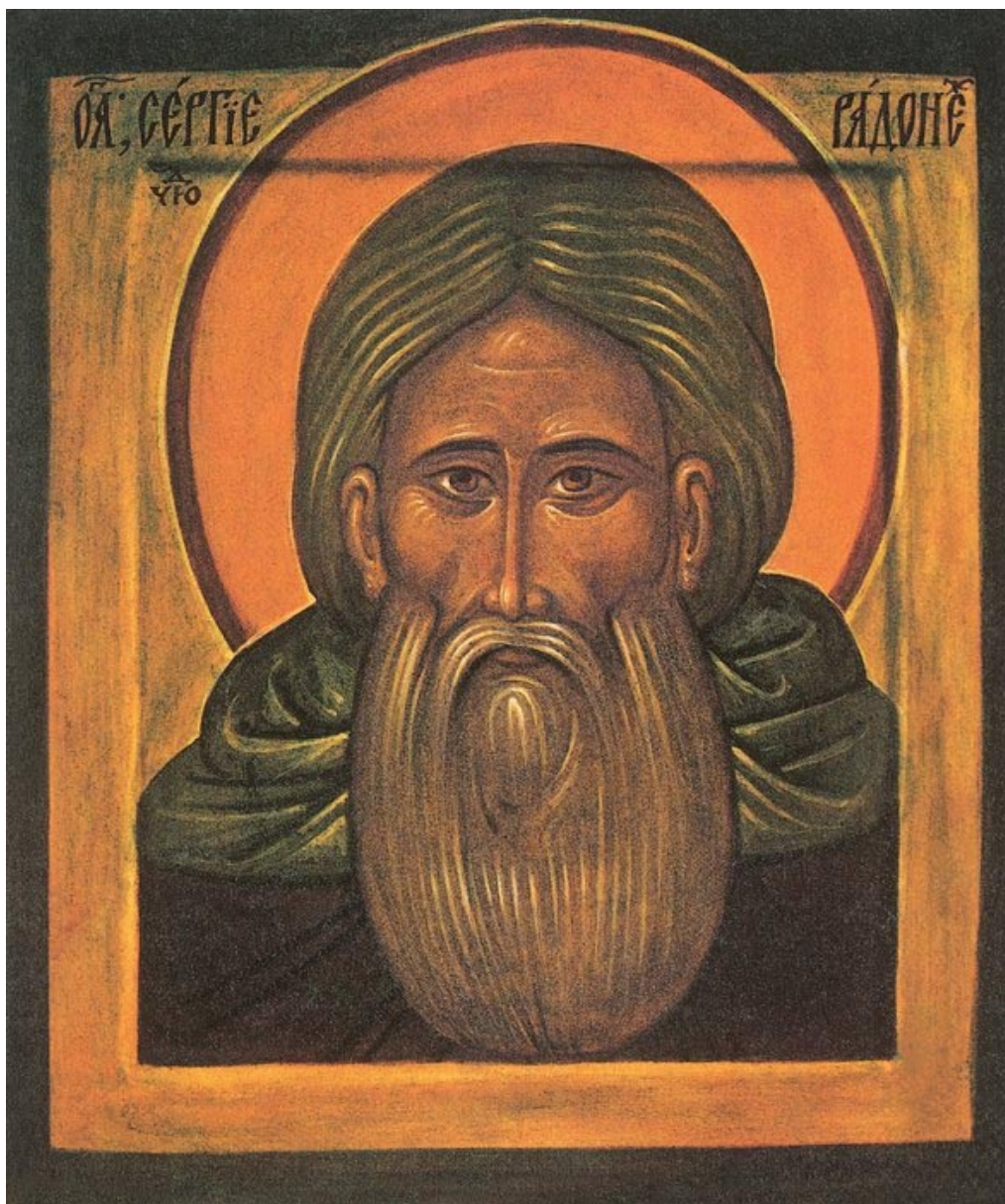
The *Illustrated Life of S. Basil the New*[205] is mostly taken up with describing twenty or more various torments, one for each vice and sin, and ending up with the Day of Judgement was not a good source for iconic subjects, any more than the *Visit of Our Lady to the Torments*.

The illustrated *Synodica*, on the contrary, being books of pious memories, full of edifying extracts from the Fathers of the Church dealing with eschatology and legend, provided excellent material[206].

The *Bulgarian Synodicon* tells of Macarius the Hermit, his visions, and his account of the forty days following death: the separation of soul and body, and how the soul of the righteous and the soul of the wicked pass. The Lord sends from the 'seventh heaven' scales, and upon them two rolls of the good and bad deeds of the dead. Upon the third day the good soul makes his obeisance before God. On the ninth day the soul sees the torments of hell, on the fortieth day they are brought into heaven with a crown upon their head and listens to the heavenly songs of the siren. Then we have the story of the man who saved himself from an infuriated camel by climbing up a tree with golden leaves from which dropped honey sweetness. He picked the leaves and licked the honey until suddenly he saw that the tree was hanging over a precipice, and that gnawing the roots of the tree were two mice, one white and the other black. This story derived from Barlaam and Josaphat, *i.e.* from the life of Buddha, and is illustrated in medieval reliefs and psalters. Next we have the sermon by Ephraem Syrus upon unjust riches, and one by S. John Chrysostom on senseless carelessness. The story of the death of the rich man and the hermit, by the coffin

is pictured the cup of death. Then follow examples to prove the benefit a soul derives from offerings made during the forty days after death, it ends with the soul's visit to the torments and the canon (or set of anthems) of Andrew the Cretan for the departure of a soul.

Tatiana Mikhailovna's Synodicon contains twenty-five illustrations to a book composed by the direction of the seventy-two disciples to set forth 'how we should remember the souls of the departed ... and what benefit comes from such remembrance.' It begins with the creation of the world, the expulsion of Adam and Eve, the murder of Abel; then the scene of the *Passing of the just soul*. Here, it explains that for two days the soul is left with an angel on earth, in the house and in the coffin. On the third day, according to Chrysostom, a man changes his form. In the next picture groups of angels greet the just soul. On the ninth day an angel takes the soul and shows her the beauties of paradise, the habitations of the saints, and the torments of hell and at the moment when prayer is made for her, robes her in a crown and royal vestments. When the prayer is finished, the angel strips the soul and takes her back to her former place. Finally, there follows a discourse of the soul's purity. Then several stories from Greek sources of how the Empress Theodora raised her deceased husband Theophilus by her prayers, and how a young man was delivered from slavery among the Persians because his parents had Mass sung for him as for a dead man for three years. The tale of the man flying from the camel brings the book to an end.



158. The Archimandrite Zinon,
Saint Sergius of Rádonezh, 20th century.
Dormition Monastery, Pskov, Russia.



159. *Saint George*, beginning of the 18th century.
National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kiev.



160. *The Martyrdom of Saint George*, end of the 17th century to the beginning of the 18th century. D. Popov Collection.



161. *Saint George Slaying the Dragon*, 17th century.
National Museum of Art of Romania, Bucharest.

The popular prints of the time are equally full of moral and edifying subjects[207]. *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity*; *Monastic Purity* (a monk crucifying vice); *The Glory of Heaven and Everlasting Joy of the Just*; *The Vanity of Life* (ascribed to Ushakón); *King Ptolemy sees the Vanity of Life*; *Purity of Soul adorned like a Queen*; *The Way to Paradise*. Iconography could borrow from the *Synodica* and popular prints religious and moral subjects suitable for its use. An early example is the series that runs right along the

iconostas screen in Ss. Peter and Paul on the Sophia Side at Nóvgorod. It has thirty scenes dealing with the remembrance of the departed, including the views of the torments. The chief church (*sobór*) of the Simonov monastery at Moscow has in its corridors a whole series of these edifying icons: *The History of the Unmerciful Man*, *A Monk's Vision of the Punishment of Usurers*, *How a Saint saw only Two Just Men in Lleaven out of Thirty Thousand Dead*. In the corridors of the chief church in the Solovetsk monastery are depicted the *Visits to the Torments*, *Monastic Purity*, and the *Apocalypse* in the cathedral of the Annunciation at Moscow.

The reason why Russian icon-painting developed this eschatological side of things and borrowed from illustrated manuscripts of the Apocalypse is to be sought in the mental poverty into which Russian life had fallen, in the prevalence of a view of life derived from the Old Testament and leading to a monastic ideal. This was reinforced by the fact that just these subjects were coming in like a flood from Greece and the Balkans where they dominated icon-painting at the end of the sixteenth century and all the seventeenth.

A pious custom that came at this time was that of putting beside the icon of the *Guardian Angel* or of the *Patron Saint* other icons with special soul-saving virtue, the commonest subject was the *Parable of Dives and Lazarus* (Luke xvi. 19-25). On the left (e.g. the State Russian Museum, No. 923) we have a feast in the house of Dives, Lazarus as a beggar in the yard, dogs licking his sores, on the right the rich man is chained in the flames of hell by three demons and is tortured by thirst which he indicates to Lazarus, looking up to him as he sits in Abraham's bosom among the angels above the clouds. This is just the sort of literal presentation of the parable as you would have in a cheap engraving with its text down the side. The Russians give the name Lazarus to Dives as well as to the beggar. The most elaborate icon of this kind is that of the *Canon or Hymn for the Passing Soul*; such a one as the State Russian Museum, No. 730, with thirty-three scenes, in the midst, the Trinity enthroned. Above is the hymn for the passing soul, and below the views of various torments. There are twenty scenes for the hymn illustrating each section. The dying man is in the habit of a monk and turns now to Christ, the Virgin, or the Child Emmanuel (their icons are shown upon the wall), now to his brethren, his friends, the Archangel Michael, and makes suitable pious speeches to each while their pictures appear above him. Then two angels take his soul from his body for judgement, he prays to the Saviour, to his guardian angel, is plunged by demons into a dark cave and finally appeals to the Virgin and is saved. The version of the hymn seems to come from Kiev, but the pictures show every sign of Moscow work in the last years of the seventeenth century.

Among edifying and moral icons must be mentioned a coarse and ascetic version of a Late Greek icon entitled *A Representation of Lawful Life*, that is, a pattern of life according to the law of Christ. In the heavens Christ gives His blessing flanked by two angels with scrolls. In the middle, upon earth, the pious man, a monk, is redeeming his sins and vices by suffering upon a cross after the text 'crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts' (Gal. v. 24). Demons are slinging stones or shooting arrows at him. Past him a young man rides a-hawking and finds a rotting corpse[208] upon his way (this too is a Buddhist story).

Naturally, such a subject exemplifying *Monastic Purity* was not likely to spread into the oratories of secular folk. They were suited with the icon of *Spiritual Purity* or the *Pure Soul*. The allegorical form is that of a maiden in imperial vestments, the dalmatic and *loron* (or embroidered cape), and the crown, standing upon the disk of the moon, holding a flaming cup and a lion upon a leash. On a hill at the back, a devil is being cast down and a serpent is fleeing from the soul: in an open cave a sinner is grieving: on the right is the sun and in the skies the form of the Saviour between an Angel and the Pure Soul. The inscriptions explain that the Pure Soul's prayers rise to heaven and higher like flames.

The greatest popularity belonged to the icon of the *Guardian Angel*. At first they merely copied that of the *Archangel Michael striking down Satan*, just as the Greeks drew him. But later, the regular form was that of the Archangel descending to earth upon a cloud with a spear or cross in his right hand and a sword in his left. By the Archangel appears the Patron Saint of the man for whom the icon was painted or even the saints after whom he, his wife and children were named. This is why such Patron Saints of a man came also to be called his 'Angels'[209]. Now was settled the difference in rank between the Archangel Michael and the Angel appointed to guard each human soul, but iconography went on making no difference in their attributes. This appears in the icon here reproduced. The background is of churches and houses, within one house a man stands and makes his morning prayer before a triptych of the *Deesis* with a hanging below it. In front the same man lies asleep on a couch, by him upon a cloud the Guardian Angel stands sentinel with the cross and sword, the latter wreathed from hilt to point as being the sword of lightning. On the right an Angel seated upon a cloud is entering the man's deeds.

In other cases, the motive of the Guardian Angel is expanded into a great number of scenes showing his defensive battles with various foes, among them the special danger of sin that assails men by night: and quite extraneous matter such as the vision of Sisoës is introduced.

But iconography in the seventeenth century did not stop short even at the aggregations of scenes and figures, more or less logically connected, of which we have given some account: to reproduce them on any attainable scale would have been useless. The painter would supply what amounted to a corpus of iconic subjects; such a corpus was called a 'Church', and consisted of either a single icon, or a polyptych with leaves hinged together, upon which found a place practically all the subjects which should go to the wall-decoration of a real church. This brings home to us the degree to which the fashion for detailed small-scale painting was brought towards the end of the seventeenth century. An even more striking example of the same thing is seen in No. 1586 of the State Russian Museum: it is a more recent work executed with remarkable skill and finds room for more than a hundred iconic scenes, disposed in twelve rows upon a board about fourteen inches high. Among the hundred are such complicated subjects as the *Creed*, all the *Festivals*, all the Saints for each month (*Menaea*), *The Only-begotten Son*, *In thee Rejoiceth*, *It is meet* in four parts, *Praise the Name of the Lord*, *The Praise of Our Lady*, *Wisdom*, *The Commencement of the Indiction*, and suchlike. Also included are subjects which are remodels of older ones, such as *Our Saviour in Council*, *Beautiful in Goodness*.

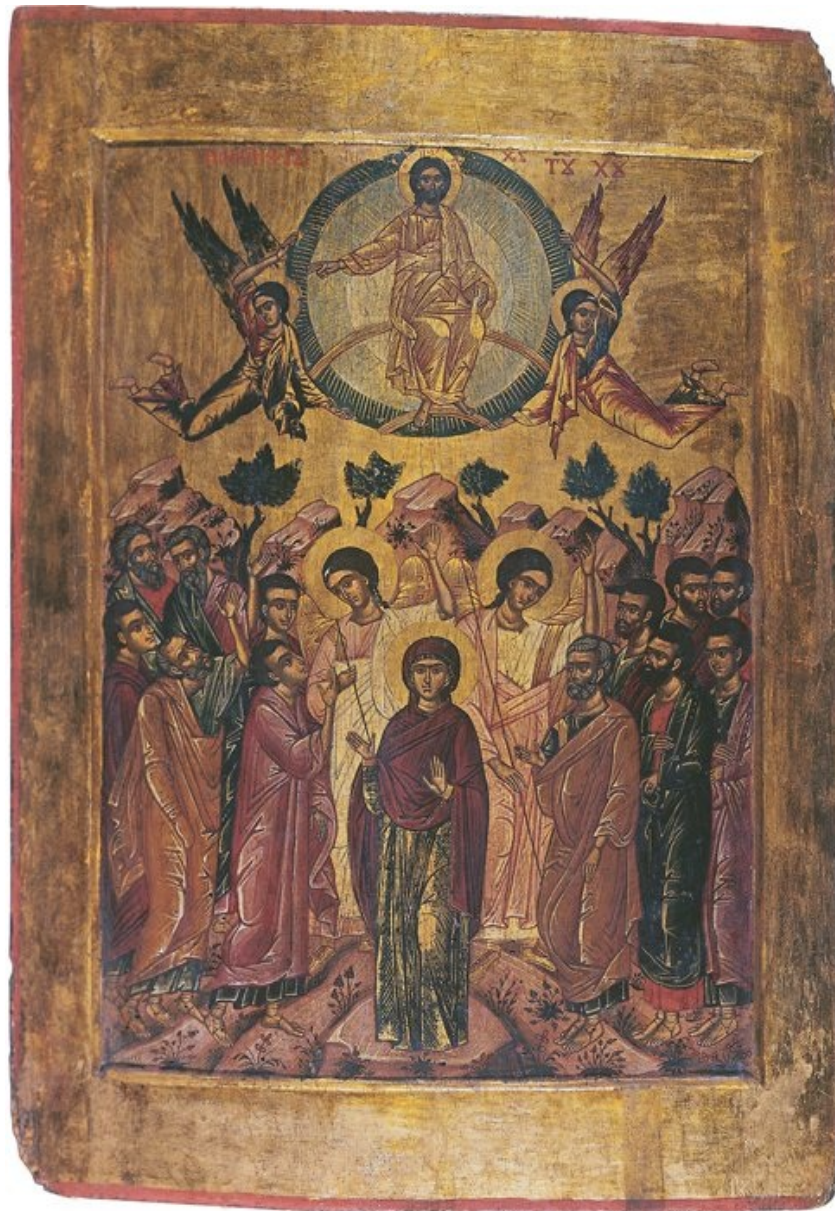
The icon of *The Second Dread Coming of Christ* (the other inscriptions are obscured), which fitly closes our series, is not as crowded as those of which we have just spoken, but contains a great many figures. The general ground is pure ochre sometimes light or buff-coloured. Upon it all the lower part of the Judgement is painted in gloomy tones or even in black, while the upper half keeps a cheerful variety and brightness of tint. The ordinary composition is complicated by an addition above which is not strictly part of the Judgement: mostly there is the Trinity enthroned (called *Paternity*), but here on the dexter side, God the Father sits upon a throne, on His right the New Jerusalem, in the centre Christ stands in a mandorla, behind Him are the Angels, and above the heavens with the sun and moon as a scroll held by Angels. On the left, a strong Angel with a spear: he ought to be pushing the fallen Angels down to hell which extends up all the left of the picture, but this detail has dropped out. Below Christ's standing figure are two Angels and the books spread out and opened; these begin the true Judgement scene.

The central figure is that of Christ, sitting as Judge upon a throne in the midst of the twelve seated Apostles: behind them Angels in attendance. Christ's figure is flanked by those of the Virgin and S. John the Baptist. Adam and Eve kneel below. The centre of the next tier is the 'Prepared Throne' (*Etimasia*)^[210] with the book, scrolls, cross, and instruments of the Passion. To its right are grouped the blessed in their orders advancing to judgement, to the left various

unbelievers, heretics, pagans, Jews and Arabs, to whom Moses points out Him whom they pierced.



162. *The Virgin of Elets*, first half of the 18th century.
Museum of Regional History, Tschernigov, Ukraine.



163. *The Ascension*, around 1680. Wallachia, Romania.
National Art Museum of Romania, Bucharest.

Below this tier souls are being weighed under the eyes of an Angel and a demon; by them is the naked figure of the 'pure soul'. The scales are held in the Hand of God which also holds the souls of the righteous (Wisd. of Sol. iii.). In the circles on each side are the earth (personified) and the sea (surrounded by the four winds), giving up the dead that are in them. Below, in the right centre, an Angel blowing the last trumpet and the four beasts seen by Daniel. Under them is a group of the blessed for whom S. Peter is unlocking the gates of Paradise.

The three Patriarchs with souls in their bosoms and the Penitent Thief coming into them, above the Virgin sits amid the shoots of the vine. From this region, monks are flying up the right-hand margin to the New Jerusalem above. This latter is crowned by a *Deesis* and guarded by Seraphim; in it can be distinguished mansions for different orders of saints. The right, or 'happy side', of the picture is cut off from the left by the coils of the Old Serpent reaching from below Adam and Eve to the mouth of hell: along the coils are twelve baskets or circles typifying the deadly sins: in the middle below is the figure of a sinner tied to a column. An Angel explains that his wickedness shuts him out of heaven, but mercy has kept him from hell. Below, on the left, is the great abyss, in the middle Satan sits nursing Judas. A group of sinners is being forced into it and under it are six minor hells with attendant fiends: one is labelled 'burning pitch'. One of the most curious elements in the whole composition is the 'Old Serpent': legends about him go back to Coptic Christianity and represent him as 'immeasurable'. Armenian manuscripts introduce him into the scene of the Descent into Hell. Christ pierces him with a spear which ends above in a cross.

The small-scale icons came necessarily to be painted no longer in the old truly iconic manner but as ordinary paintings or *fryaz'*. The chief cause of this almost involuntary adoption of the new method was its greater quickness of execution. The old style required patient copying of the types, complicated draperies with angular folds and laborious highlights, whereas the ordinary fashion, or rather the species of *fryaz'* which had been borrowed from the later Greeks, had actually simplified the western painting from which it was adopted, and required only the general modelling of the body, face, and folds, and entirely gave up the characteristically sculpturesque treatment which made the whole effectiveness of the iconic types.

The close of the seventeenth century is generally taken as ending the history of Russian icon-painting, although its existence has continued to the present day. Peter the Great apparently was attracted by every craft and art, and upon various occasions bestowed as gifts icons that had been presented to him. The State Russian Museum possessed one, given to the Priklonski family, and even the Vatican preserves, as a great rarity, an icon of the detailed style. But icon-painting gradually withered most of all because the important orders were now given to painters in the ordinary sense, and the old technique was held in honour by no one but the Old Believers.

Icon-painting hid itself away in the depths of the common people, in the home-practised crafts of the settlements devoted to skilled trades. At first, such existed in several governments, but after a time they limited themselves to the Government of Vladimir which produced wood for the panels. There were also

shops in Moscow itself, but they drew the recruits for their companies of craftsmen mainly from the icon-painting settlements of Mstëra, Khóluy, and Palëkh, also from Shúya in Vladimir. Only the eighteenth century was a period of complete oblivion, with the beginning of the nineteenth interest in icon-painting revived, encouraged by the obstinate survival among the people of such a forgotten art. It may be said that this archaeological interest did little to help the craftsmen to exist, still less to develop their skill. Free and assured work was the lot of few craftsmen; most of them fell under the yoke of exploiters who organised, not merely companies, but whole schools for icon-painting in which the painters' families toiled for long years. The master-craftsmen taught by no other method than that of giving their pupils models to copy. When a pupil had reached the grade of master of any particular manner, he was quite incapable of painting in any other manner or even of making any drawing on his own account. Further, the icon-painters, in order to secure uninterrupted work themselves, preferred to work in regular factories or, if they worked at home, to supply the factories with cheap and common icons, even icons meant to be covered by metallic repoussé *rízy* so that only the faces, hands, and feet need to be executed. Such an icon is called *pod-ubórnaya*, from *pod* – under, *ubor* – decoration. Even these metallic frames and trappings were largely superseded by the use of gilt or coloured tin-foil, which with imitation flowers made the 'bright corners' of Russian peasants' houses shine with glints of colour. Obviously icons of careful execution and costing several roubles were beyond the means of the villagers, and they had to be supplied with all sorts of counterfeits and cheap stuff.

Next, the enterprising gentlemen who made tin boxes for blacking and other such products were struck with the idea of applying the process of printing in colour upon tin plates to the production of icons. The firm Jacquot and Bonacœur was followed by others in opening a factory for making such printed icons and received the approval of the Holy Synod. Such competition brought not only the country settlements but even the workshops at Moscow into a hopeless position at the beginning of the century, and they appealed piteously to the Synod for protection against the undermining of their craft. Of course, the printing firms, having made sure of the Synod's approval, had no idea of advantaging the country people in any way. They just bought up a certain number of the more usual icons as produced at Mstëra or Palëkh, used the designs for their tin plates, and sold the printed reproductions at about the same price as the hand-painted icons and the diocesan authorities furthered this commerce. Naturally the firms did not think of executing the whole iconographic cycle still in circulation and limited themselves to a few dozen of the most

important subjects or types (e.g. of the Virgin). Hence, any one who had a rare name and wished to have an icon of his own saint could not get one unless it was a hand-painted one. Still, icon-painting as a craft was threatened with extinction.

We must further bear in mind that more than three-quarters of Russia, that is, the Ukraina, New Russia along the Black Sea coast, West Russia and Siberia, had no icon-painting of their own at all and had to put up with icons from central Great Russia, which by their unfamiliar forms were for them strange and foreign. This is why, for the most part, Russian churches have no painted wall decoration at all and are very poor in icons. Except in Great Russia, the churches were quite bare of the real 'Orthodox' richness in icons. One reason to which can be put down the rise of rationalistic sects. Among the people is the indifference to the ritual and iconic side of Orthodoxy.

A committee was appointed by the Government to go into the question of icons and their producers. It recommended that the first thing was to raise the artistic standard of the icon-painting villages, by setting up in them schools for drawing and icon-painting. The next thing was to start a government establishment in connexion with the Holy Synod for printing icons upon wood. The first part of the programme was put into execution and very important publications were produced, but the latter part of the scheme, which would have relieved the industry of the need to produce utterly unworthy work was left for another time. The hope for the future would seem to be to raise the artistic character of the craft to such a level that religion would help it to rise to free and personal artistic creativeness.

The Russian people have answered to its high and spiritual literature its century-old skill in icon-painting, and deserves, like other European nations, to give it a period of education on the basis of its own spiritual and religious achievements.



164. *The Saints Martyr Barbara and Catherine*, middle of the 18th century. National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kiev.

Glossary

Akathist Hymn:

a liturgical poem honouring the Virgin Mary recited on the last Saturday of Lent.

Acheiropoieta:

a Greek word meaning “not made by human hands,” designating images with miraculous origins, of which the most famous is the Image of Edessa (see Holy Face).

Anargyroi:

a name given to holy physicians, starting with Saints Cosmas and Damian, who healed the sick free of charge.

Anastasis:

resurrection. Wrongly named “Christ’s Descent into Limbo,” this scene originated in the Byzantine Empire in the beginning of the 7th century. Having broken open the gates of Hell, Christ resurrects Adam and Eve, and more generally, the souls of the just in Hell.

Apocrypha:

a term originating in a Greek adjective meaning “hidden,” signifying all inauthentic writings imitating the books of the Old and New Testaments.

Arian Heresy or Arianism:

a heresy named after Arius, a priest of one of the districts of Alexandria, who, around 320, denied the omnipotent and eternal divinity of Christ.

Assist:

fine hachure combining gold and white, allowing an iconographer to show the light emanating from saints.

Canon:

a prescriptive text defining dogmatic and disciplinary rules of the church; teachings or principles. For example, the canons set at two councils of 692 and 787 defining the teaching on icons, as well as the criteria for judging the liturgical quality of an image in accordance with spiritual practices of the Orthodox church; a collection of hymns and liturgical texts.

Chalcedon:

see Council.

Chancel:

a low barrier in a church that surrounds the sanctuary. It separates the sacred space from the congregation.

Chrism or chrysography:

a monogram denoting Christ composed of the interwoven Greek letters x and p.

Copts:

Christians of Egypt.

Council:

a special assembly of bishops of a region (local council) or of the whole church (ecumenical council) in order to decide on a doctrinal, canonical, or pastoral issue. There had only been seven ecumenical councils before the Schism of 1054 between the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches. These were the First Council of Nicaea in 325, First Council of Constantinople in 381, Council of Ephesus in 431, Council of Chalcedon in 451, and Second Council of Constantinople in 553, Third Council of Constantinople in 680 and Second Council of Nicaea in 787. Those held after the Schism, whether organized by Roman Catholic or Orthodox churches, are not considered ecumenical.

Deisis:

an image depicting the Virgin Mary and St. John the Baptist interceding before Christ the Judge, imploring him to forgive the sins of the world.

Dodecaortona:

a term used to denote the twelve major feasts of the Orthodox liturgical year.

Dormition:

representation of the Virgin Mary on her death bed surrounded by the apostles and Christ, entrusting the soul of his mother to the angels.

Doxology:

hymn of praise.

Eleousa:

see Virgin.

Epiphany:

denotes different manifestations of Christ, and specifically the apparition of a star to the Magi.

Epistyle:

an ancient term used to describe an architrave.

Hagiographic series:

a collection of images retracing the life of a saint.

Hagiography:

laudatory writings describing the lives of saints.

Heresy:

a Christian doctrine contradicting the teachings of Revelation.

Hesychasm:

monastic spiritual tradition of the Orthodox church. It began in the 4th century and was practiced by such figures as Evagrius of Pontus, St. John Climacus and St. Isaac of Syria, and later, in the 13th and 14th centuries, by St. Gregory Palamas on Mount Athos in Greece. Nowadays, the elements of hesychasm have spread to the west and have known certain success, as illustrated by the popularity of *The Pilgrim's Tale* (see Hesychasts).

Hesychasts:

a Christian who practices a continual silent invocation of the name of Jesus. The term applies more specifically to monks who retire to solitude, in order to give themselves fully to this prayer.

Hetimasy:

a symbol of the second coming of Christ at the Last Judgment. It is represented by a cross and a book lying on the seat of an empty throne, awaiting his coming.

Hierarch:

a title given to certain high dignitaries of the Eastern church, namely to bishops.

Hodegetria:

see Virgin.

Holy Face:

According to a legend, King Abgar of Edessa, sick with leprosy, sent one of his servants to invite Christ in the hope of getting cured. Christ sent him a cloth on which he imprinted his face. This miraculous imprint is believed by the Orthodox church to be the first icon originating directly from the prototype and legitimising all the others.

Hypostasis:

person. The dogma of the Trinity professes one God in three persons or hypostases (Father, Son and the Holy Spirit), sharing one nature but nevertheless distinct from each other. The notion of "person," as opposed to that of an "individual," signifies the idea of the personal existence of each person of the Trinity while being consubstantial with the other.

Iconoclasm:

a doctrine originating in the 7th and 8th centuries in the Byzantine Empire which attempted to suppress the cult of images. Two iconoclast crises, marked by the destruction of icons, occurred in the periods from 730 to 787, and then from 815 to 843. The veneration of icons was restored by a church council on 11 March 843, the first Sunday of Lent, the date celebrated ever since as the feast of Orthodoxy.

Iconoclast:

literally “a breaker of images,” also called iconophobe or iconomac, those who combat images. In this case, the iconoclasts do not oppose all types of images but only anthropomorphic representations of God.

Iconoclast Crisis:

see Iconoclasm.

Iconodule:

an advocate or defender of images. During the iconoclast crises, iconodules were also called iconophiles, or, more generally, the orthodox, as opposed to iconoclasts, who were considered heretics.

Iconographer:

the name given to an icon-painter.

Iconostasis:

a dividing wall, consisting of three parts and covered with icons, that separates the nave from the sanctuary in an Orthodox church. Starting the fifteenth century, it was frequently made of carved wood covered with gold.

Logos:

speech, word. Christ is the creating Word of God, “Word made flesh,” according to the Prologue of the Gospel of John.

Mandorla:

a circle surrounding the figure of Christ to symbolise the radiance of God’s glory.

Mandyllion:

the cloth on which Christ miraculously imprinted the image of his face in order to send it to Abgar, the king of Edessa (see Holy Face).

Melkites:

Orthodox Christians adhering to the three patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. They owe their name to their opponents, the Monophysites (see Monophysism), who called them “King’s Men” (from the Arabic word melek, or king) for joining the Byzantine emperor in opposing Monophysism.

Menology:

a calendar with icons and biographies of saints arranged in the order of the liturgical year.

Metropolitan:

an Orthodox prelate occupying an intermediate rank between a patriarch and bishops. Originally, this term applied to a bishop of a metropolis, a capital city of a province.

Monophysism:

a religious doctrine claiming that Christ only had one nature, while possessing all the human and divine qualities. It was condemned in 451 by the Council of Chalcedon, which defined Christ as a person endowed with two natures.

Myrrhophore:

holy women carrying oils used for anointment.

Nestorianism:

the doctrine of Nestorius (380-451) which professed the separation between the divine and human natures of Christ. This doctrine, condemned by the Council of Ephesus in 431, found refuge in Mesopotamia and enjoyed Persian protection. It lies at the origin of the Assyrian Church.

Old Believers:

schismatics from the Russian Orthodox Church, who around the mid-eighteenth century refused to accept liturgical reforms. Excommunicated, they endured their exile in the north of Russia and in Siberia.

Paleologus:

the name of one of the aristocratic Byzantine families who reconquered Constantinople in 1261. Michael VIII Paleologus established an imperial dynasty that ruled for two centuries (1261-1453); an adjective referring to this period.

Pantocrator:

a representation of Christ enthroned in majesty.

Patriarch:

a honorary title given to a primate of major Orthodox churches.

Pokrov:

see Virgin.

Prototype:

a model of reference for an image, assuring resemblance. Christ or saints are the prototypes of icons representing them.

Royal Doors:

central doors of iconostasis.

Schism:

from the Greek word *skhisma*, meaning “division,” this term signifies separations of a group of believers from the main religion. The Great Western Schism of 1054 separated the Church into western and eastern, following a conflict between the Patriarch of Constantinople and Pope Leo IX.

Synaxarium:

a book containing summaries of the lives of saints arranged in chronological order of the feasts of the liturgical year.

Thaumaturgus:

a manifestation of God, namely at Christ's baptism (Holy Spirit appearing in the form of a dove) or at the Transfiguration (when the divine light of Christ became visible to the apostles present).

Theotokos:

literally "the mother of God," referring to the Virgin Mary, who gave birth to the person of Christ in human form (Council of Ephesus); the Council of Constantinople of 553 also honoured her with the title of "ever Virgin."

Virgin:

in combination with names like *Orans* (Praying), *Hodegetria*, *Eleusa*, and others, it refers to various icons of the Blessed Virgin named after a place of consecration or a particular image of the Mother of God.

Eleusa: Virgin of Loving Kindness, also known as Virgin of Tenderness. She bows her head towards the Child, cheek to cheek, in a gesture of tenderness.

Hodegetria: Virgin who shows the way, referring to a sacred icon of the Hodegos monastery.

Pokrov: Virgin spreading out her shroud of protection.

Time-Line of Icon Painting

In the Byzantine Empire:

330: Constantinople becomes the capital of the eastern Roman Empire in the reign of Constantine.

6th century: First great age of Byzantine art in the reign of Justinian (527-565).

726-843: Iconoclastic period in the reign of Leo III (717-741) and of Theophilus (829-842).

867-1056: Macedonian renaissance.

1080-1185: Comnenan dynasty.

1204: Storming of Constantinople by the knights of the fourth crusade and sacking of the city.

1204-1261: Latin interlude.

1261-1453: Paleologan dynasty.

1453: Fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks.

In Russia:

862-879: Rúrik, a Varyag from Sweden, established his power at Novgorod. His successor, Olég, transfers it to Kiev; these are the end points of a commercial route from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

879-912: Intercourse, both warlike and peaceful, with Byzance: beginnings of Christianity.

912-945: Igor'. His widow Ól'ga, regent for his son Svyatosláv, goes to Constantinople and accepts Christianity.

955-988: Reaction to Paganism under Svyatosláv, Yaropólk, and Vladimir.

988: Vladimir takes Chersonesus (Cherson, Korsún'), the chief Greek town of the Crimea, is there baptized, and brings thence to Kiev priests, holy vessels, and icons. He marries Anna, daughter of the Emperor, and adopts Christianity for Russia, building churches at Kiev, Novgorod.

1015: Death of Vladimir. Murder of Boris and Gleb. Accession of Yarosláv, 1015-1054, under whom S. Sophia of Kiev was built. After Yaroslav the principality of Russia falls to pieces under the descendants of Vladimir.

1147: Moscow first mentioned.

1169: Vladímir on the Klyáz'ma becomes the seat of the Grand Duke of Russia, pressure from the steppe people moving the centre of gravity towards the NE. Novgorod and Pskov almost independent republics.

1224: Battle of the Kalka. The Tartars defeat the Russian princes and dominate

Russia, largely isolating it.

1240: Destruction of Kiev; S. Russia is swept bare, the people fleeing either NW. to Galicia or N. and E. to the basin of the Oká, Vladimir, and Súzdal'.

1299: The Metropolitan See is officially transferred from Kiev to Vladimir.

1328: The See is transferred to Moscow, which steadily rises through the century under Prince Ivan Kalitá 1328, and Metropolitans Peter 1308, Theognostus 1327, Alexis 1353.

1338: The Trinity Monastery founded by S. Sergius of Rádonezh, *d.* 1393.

1380 Battle of Kúlikovo Póle: first great defeat of the Tartars.

1389: Seat of Grand Duchy fixed at Moscow. Eastern region declines owing to the rise of the Kazan Tartars.

1450: Rise of Stróganov Family.

1472: Ivan III of Moscow marries Sophia Paleologus: reinforcement of Byzantinism.

1475: The Cathedral of the Dormition at Moscow built by a Bolognese, Fioraventi.

1478: Novgorod conquered by Moscow.

1480: Breaking of the Tartar yoke.

1542: Macarius, Metropolitan of Moscow.

1547: Macarius brings icon-painters from Novgorod.

1551: Council of the Stoglav or Hundred Chapters to reform the Church.

1552: Taking of Kazán.

1553: The English reach Muscovy by the White Sea. These events lead to a revival in eastern Russia, Rostóv, and Yaroslávl'.

1558: Stróganovs becomes very prosperous.

1588: Patriarchate of Moscow established.

1591: Murder of Demetrius, son of Ivan the Terrible, at Úglich.

1598: Death of Theodore, son of Ivan, last of the House of Rurik. Accession of Borís Godunóv.

1604: The Poles invade Russia with the False Demetrius.

1605: Death of Godunóv. The Troublous Times last till 1613.

1613: Accession of Michael Feódorovich Románov.

1645: Tsar Alexêy Mikháilovich.

1652: Nikon Patriarch.

1654: His Council to reform the Service Books and Rites leads to the great schism of the Old Believers rejecting his innovations.

1667: Paisius Patriarch of Alexandria and Macarius of Antioch journey through Russia.

1686: Peter the Great sole Tsar.

1700: Patriarchate abolished.

1707: St. Petersburg made the capital.

1721: The Clerical Rules, a reform of the Church accompanied by much disregard of antiquity.

1917: The Revolution.

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Notes

- [1] *Kustár'* (adj. *kustárny*) from German *Kunst* means a craftsman who works on his own, whether in wood, metal, or any material, in his own house in a town or more often a village, as opposed to a manu-facturer and his employees. See, e.g., *L'Art Populaire Russe à la Seconde Exposition Koustare de toute la Russie à Petrograd*, 1913, pubd. by the Ministry of Agriculture, P. 1914. Text in Russian and French: 35 icons illustrated, many with prices.
- [2] *Podubórnoe*, a board painted only where the flesh parts showed through the metal *riza*.
- [3] *Frydz'*, a style of icon so deeply influenced by western methods as to be an unsatisfactory compromise.
- [4] I retain this the usual translation of *Sobór*, literally a 'bringing together'; hence (1) a Synod or Great Council of Church or State; (2) an Assembly of holy persons joining in praise round the Virgin, an Archangel, etc.; (3) a service conducted by several clergy; (4) a Collegiate Church and so the principal churches of towns or monasteries, but not a Bishop's seat, e.g. the five Sobors in the Kremlin at Moscow, the little ancient church of *Spas na Boric* (Our Saviour in the Pine-wood), the Great *Uspénski Sobor* (Dormition), *Blagovêshchenski* (Annunciation), *Arkhángelski* with the graves of the old Tsars, and *Voznesénski* (Ascension) with the graves of the Tsaritsas.
- [5] *Otêchestvennÿa Dostopámyatnosti* (Memorials of the Fatherland), 1823-4; I. Snegirëv and Martýnov, *Pámyatniki drév-nyago Khudózhestva v Rossíi* (Monuments of ancient Art in Russia), 1850 (two icons); *Drévnosti Rossíyskago Gosudárstva* (Anti-quités de l'Empire Russe), 1849-53 (ten icons); I. Snegirëv, *Pámyatniki Moskóv-skikh Drévnostey* (Monuments of Moscow Antiquities), 1841-2 (five icons); K. Tromónin, *Dostopámyatnosti Moskvý* (Memorials of Moscow), 1834! A. L. Vel'tman, same title, 1848; Evgeni [Bolkhovítinov], *Kíevo-Pechérskaya Lávra. Kievo-Sofiyski Sobór*; for his works see E. Shmúrlo, *The Metropolitan Evgeni as a Scholar*, P. 1888; M. Pogodin, 'The Fate of Archaeology in Russia', *Journ. Min. Instr.*, 1869, No. 9.
- [6] N. I. Veselóvski, *Istóriya Imperátor-skago Rússkago Arkheologícheskago Óbsh-chestva* (Society), P. 1900.
- [7] *Byt Rússkikh Tsarév i Tsaríts*, M. 1872, 2nd ed. 1915: *Materiály dlya Istórii Rússkago Ikonopisániya po arkhívnym dokúmentam*.
- [8] G. D. Filimonov, *Description of the Contents of the Korobánov Museum*, M. 1849. A *Pódlinnik* is a guide to iconography describing fully how a scene or

person is to be represented; if illustrated, it is called *Litsevóy Pódlinnik*.

[9] *Zapíski* (Transactions) *Imp. Arkh. Obshch. (Soc)*, viii (1856), pp. 1-196: re-issued by A. S. Suvórin, P. 1901.

[10] For this church see P. Gusev in *Trans. XV* (Novgorod, 1911) *R. Archaeological Congress*, ii, pp. 138-50, Pl. i-vI, M. 1916.

[11] Newly cleaned icons: A. I. Anísimov, *he Icon of S. Theodore Stratelates in his Church at Novgorod*, 1922; and *The Icon of Our Lady of Vladimir in the Cathedral of the Assumption at Moscow*, in preparation.

[12] N. P. Kondakov, *Iconography of the B. V. M.: Connexions*, P. 1910

[13] N. P. Likhachëv, *Istorícheskoe Znachénie Italo-grécheskoy Ikonopisi* (Hist. Significance of Italo-Greek Icon-painting), P. 1911, takes the same line.

[14] P. Murátov, 'History of Painting, I. Introduction to the History of Old Russian Painting, II. Origin of Old Russian Painting', in vol. vi of I. Grabar', *History of Russian Art*, M. 1909-. He regards both Italy and Russia as learning side by side from the late Byzantine revival seen at Kahrie Djámi and Mistra. The illustrations to this book, including many Moscow icons, make a most valuable supplement to our selection: so do the more accessible Réau and Halle mostly founded upon it. E. H. M.

[15] E. H. Minns, *Scythians and Greeks*, p. 538, quoting Kondakov, *Russian Hoards*, pp. 33 sqq.

[16] Ch. Diehl, *Manuel d'Art Byzantin*, Paris, 1925, p. 85, f. 28.

[17] I write the word *icon* as the accepted transliteration of *ílkúv*: the genitive *ílkóvos* has in modern Greek produced an ordinary feminine nominative, and this form passed into Russian as *ikóna*: Russian has also translated it as *óbráz*, which we can only render by 'image', but this in English does not readily suggest a flat.

[18] W. Grüneisen, 'The Illusionist Portrait', *Sofia* (a Russian Art magazine), No. 4, 1914; Graul, *Die antike Porträt-gemälde aus den Grabstätten des Fajum*, Leipzig, 1888; G. Ebers, *Eine Gallerie antiker Porträts*, Berlin, 1889; U. Wilcken, 'Die Hellenistische Porträts aus El Fajum', *Arch. Anzeiger.*, iv, 1889; Girard, *Peinture Antique*, Paris, 1892, pp. 249 sqq.; Th. Graf, *Collection de Portraits Antiques de l'Époque Grecque en Égypte*, Vienna, n. d.; P. Buberl, *Gr.-Äg. Mumienbildnisse*, ib. 1922.

[19] By 'Byzantine' the author generally means 'Constantinopolitan', or at least truly Greek, but sometimes he falls into the ordinary vague use of the term.

[20] See the controversy between S. Jerome and the Gaulish pilgrim Vigilantius who vainly tried to protest against the veneration of relics and icons, all-night watchings in *martyria*, and suchlike. Migne, *P. L.* xxii, *Ep. Hieronymi*, lxi, *ad Vigilantium*; xxiii, p. 337, *Liber contra Vigilantium*, A. D. 406.

- [21] Kondakov, *Iconography* B. V. M., i (1914), pp. 131-5, 153-8.
- [22] Latin *mantele*, 'napkin'. Strictly speaking the Vernicle is the imprint of Christ's features on the way to crucifixion, while the Greek napkin shows them yet unmarred.
- [23] Russian Museum, No. 1810, from the collection of N. P. Likhachëv.
- [24] For a summary of the whole controversy see A. I. Dobroklonski, S. *Theodore, Confessor and Abbot of the Studium*, i, pp. 34-47, P. 1913. The orthodox finally laid down that icons were not to receive 'adoration in the proper sense'.
- [25] Dalton, *Byz. Art*, p. 318, f. 193, after Ph. Lauer, *Mon Piot*, 1906.
- [26] Recent cleaning is giving new material.
- [27] Grabar'-Muratov, p. 149; Alpátov and Lásareff (Lázarev), *Jahrb. d. Preusz. Kunstsamml.*, LXIV. ii, p. 146, f. 3.
- [28] Kondakov, *Macedonia*, 1909, pp. 249 sqq., Pl. V-XII.
- [29] The more general explanation of the term is that the *mêstnyya ikóny* are 'the icons of the locally revered Festivals and Saints': so Anisimov defines them in his *Guide to the Exhibition of Monuments of Old-Russian Icon-painting*, held in the Historical Museum, Moscow, in 1926.
- [30] A. Popov, *Survey of the Ancient Russian eleventh to sixteenth Centuries*, P. 1875, *Works of Controversy against the Latins*, pp. 56 sqq.
- [31] G. D. Filimónov, *The Church of St. Nicholas na Lipnê* 'On the Shape of Iconostases', 1859; I. A. Sperónski, 'Early Russian Iconostases', *Khristiánskoe Chténie*, 1891-2. I use the Russian form *iconostás*, not 'iconostasis' which is neither Greek nor Russian. The Greek *tlnovooráa-íov* means an oratory or icon-shrine. The Russian *iconostas* is called in Greek from the Latin *templum* in the sense of 'purlin, horizontal beam'. pronounced *temblo* it gave in Russian *tyabló* (cf. *kolyáda* from *kalendae*), used for the tiers of icons on the high iconostases. See Golubinski, *Hist. Russ. Ch.* 2 I. ii, pp. 206-8, 214.
- [32] *Chin* means 'order, rank', used of different orders of Angels or Saints; but it has an idea of completeness which accounts for its use for the 'Complete *Deesis*'. A *chin* with the *Deesis*, two Archangels and two Saints was called a *Sed'mítsa*, a *hebdomas*, which might be expected to mean a week.
- [33] Yet the Greeks sometimes apply it to the great doors at the west end of a church, and call the screen doors 'Holy'.
- [34] *Kiot*; one or more icons may be set in a frame or cupboard generally adorned with a pediment above and glazed in front: this makes a kind of shrine and is called a *kiot*. Or it may form a kind of triptych, often with many small iconic scenes painted upon the doors, pediment, and surround.
- [35] Christ giving the Eucharist in both kinds to the Apostles.

- [36] The three Angels that appeared to Abraham.
- [37] The type of Our Lady of Blachernae bearing Emmanuel in a round medallion, *vide infra*.
- [38] N. P. Kondakov, *Les Émaux Byzantins* pp. 385-8; *Rússkiye Kiddy* (Russian *de la Collection Zvenigorodskoi*, 1892, Pl. 28, Hoards), 1896, i, Pl. viil. to hang along the forehead; such a string is called *ryásno*. An icon was swathed in an embroidered silk towel (*poloténtse*, *plat*) to keep off dust, and below it hung an embroidered pall (*pelená*).
- [39] I think the word must be Slavonic, but our author connects it with some sort of adornment of Imperial clothes, Codinus, *de Offic.* iii. 3. E.H. M.
- [40] I hear that a similar stripping of *rizy* has gone on since the revolution and has exposed much interesting work. E. H. M
- [41] *Risúnok*, ‘drawing’, answers in meaning to the French *dessin*, both ‘drawing’ and ‘design’; the verb *risovát* comes through the Polish from the German *reissen*, which besides its ordinary sense ‘to tear’ means ‘to score, to draw with a sharp point, to draw in outline’, being connected with *ritzen* and the same word as our *write*: *scribo*, show the same original meaning. The uses of the Slavonic *pisát*, originally ‘to paint or decorate’ (*pingo* may be allied), means ‘write’ as well as ‘paint’, and ‘paint’ both of walls, *tsérkov’ podpísana*, ‘a church was frescoed’, and of icons, *ikonostás napísan*, ‘a screen was furnished with icons’. Mr. N. B. Jopson, Reader in Slavonic Philology at King’s College, London, allows me these etymologies. The ‘stylus’ with which icon-painters draw contours upon the gesso ground. From *pisát* comes *pis’mó*, the ordinary word for a ‘letter’, but specially used of the ‘style or school’ of icons. Less important varieties are called *poshib* (lit. ‘stroke’) = ‘local or personal manners’. The equivalent western words *stil*, *shkóla*, *manera*, came into Russian with western painting but are often used of icons. E. H. M.
- [42] In particular, let me recommend both for exactness of observation and fullness of illustrations that admirable work of Gabriel Millet, *Recherches sur l’Iconographie de l’Évangile aux XIVe, XVe et XVIe siècles*, 670 gravures, Paris, 1916. N. P. K.
- [43] For a similar division of labour under Akbar *vide* Percy Brown, *Indian Painting under the Mughals*, Oxford, 1924, p. no. This is not the only point of resemblance between Russian and Indian art at that time.
- [44] After N. P. Kondakov, *Iconogr. of Our Saviour*, lith. 9. Inscr. above, ‘Holy Trinity, Father, Son, the Lord of Sabaoth, IC. XC’: below, *Obráz Otechestvo*, ‘Icon of Paternity’. *Znamya Vasiliya iKondakova Usoltsa*, ‘drawn by Basil Kondakov of Usolye’.
- [45] I added this to the author’s selection of plates because it illustrates the ways

of icon-painters and affords an example of perhaps the most important composition which he had not included. E. H. M.

[46] Kondakov, *Athos*, p. 105, Pl. xiv. This icon seems to be that seen in the eleventh century by the Nóvgorod pilgrim Antony among the holy things of Constantinople: he calls it 'Nicholas split forehead', from the damage it has suffered: another copy of the same type is at Vich in Catalonia: *ib.*, p. 108, f. 50; *Mon. Piot*, vii, 1900, p. 95, Pl. XI.

[47] For these vestments see A. Fortescue, *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, pp. 405 sqq. *The felón*, *paenula*, is the chasuble at first made of soft stuff: when made of stiff material it was for convenience short-ened in front instead of being cut away at the sides as in the West. A special variety *oí felón* was entirely covered with a pattern of crosses (*polistávri*); this was reserved for bishops: the *sakkos* is of the shape of a Western dalmatic, *i.e.* slit up the sides and with sleeves; originally peculiar to the patriarch, it is now worn by all bishops; but it does not commonly appear upon early icons; it is worn by S. Alexis in the seventeenth century. The actual *sakkos* of S. Photius is figured by Millet, ap. Michel, *Histoire de l'Art*, III. ii, p. 957. Our author appears to use *sakkos* in the sense of *polistavri*, the vestment in which nearly all bishops are portrayed.

[48] One of the differences between Greeks and Latins was the position of the fingers in blessing: the earlier Greeks folded down the thumb, fourth and fifth fingers and by extending 'two fingers' (*dvupérstie*), the index and middle finger, symbolized the dual nature of Christ, cf. *Mon. Piot*, vii (1900), pp. 95, 96. The Latins put thumb, index and middle together to typify the Trinity. The Greeks later adopted a pose whereby the four letters were formed by the five fingers; this was called *imenoslóvnoe*, 'name-word'. In the seventeenth century Nikon, Patriarch of Moscow, finding that many errors had crept into the Slavonic service books reformed them to the norm of the contemporary Greek, but in many cases, such as this of the blessing, the Russians had preserved the more ancient usage. The innovations caused a great schism in the Church and were only forced upon it by the power of the State. The Old Believers who refuse still to accept them, had a special reverence for ancient icons, and to them is due the preservation of many most important examples (see *infra*).

[49] It is hardly necessary to recall that the basis of the painting is a layer of gypsum and glue (gesso) spread upon the wood: Dionysius gives directions. Sometimes the wood is first covered with linen: cf. Theophilus, I. xix. See the editions by Hendrie (1847) and Ilg (1874), with English and German translations.

[50] As I read it, the *membrana* (Hendrie reads *membrina*) or first coat was of

yellow burnt white lead, natural white lead, and cinnabar or red ochre: if the face was ruddy, more red; if white, more white; if pale, *prasinum* was added. While the shadows were put in over this with *posch*, a mixture of *membrana* with *prasinum*, burnt red ochre and a little cinnabar. Next the rosy tints were applied, and after-wards *lumina* for the highlights by an admixture of white. E. H. M.

[51] *The Greek Painters' Guide*: This guide to the practice on Mount Athos gives a wonderfully full account of both technical processes and iconography: it is translated in Didron, *Manuel d'Iconographie Chrétienne*, 1845, Eng. trans, omitting technical first part, 1886: under the influence of the monks and of the famous forger Simonides, Didron referred the guide to the fourteenth or fifteenth century and Manuel Panselinos, who is quoted as the model artist, to the twelfth. Bayet, *Rev. Archéologique*, iii. 3 (1884), pp. 325-34, makes it probable that he worked in 1535 and that the guide, as we have it, belongs to the eighteenth century. See (modern Greek) preface to the best text published by A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, St. P. 1909, to which I always refer; cf. Diehl, *Manuel*, p. 854; Dalton, *Byz. Art*, p. 649. But it gives a much more ancient tradition, as is shown by its frequent agreement with Theophilus. Our author says it existed in the fifteenth century and may go back to the fourteenth.

[52] *Sóchnÿya*, lit. juicy, Fr. *juteux*.

[53] This is from the root of *bêly* 'white' and suggests 'white showing through'.

[54] Kondakov, *Iconography of B.V.M.*, i (1914), pp. 321-3.

[55] Salazaro, *Studi sui Monumenti d'Italia Meridionale*, 1871, Pls. x-xv.

[56] In Russian the root *kras-* confuses inextricably the ideas of 'red', of 'paint' and of 'beauty'.

[57] *Zélen* in Russian is 'green colour': *pra* is a rare prefix suggesting antiquity.

[58] Codinus, *de Offic.* iv. I, speaks of a staff made which I take to mean 'with damascened 2563 I: knops': the word may be a variant for, 'hammered in'; or it may be compounded with *ts*, *ívós*, 'sinew = thread': see du Cange, s. v.

[59] Dalton, *Byz. Art*, pp. 616-20.

[60] e.g. the *Transfiguration* in the National Gallery, No. 1330.

[61] Such a pair of mountains we have in the S. Jerome of the National Gallery, No. 3543.

[62] Kondakov, *Russian Hoards*, i (1896), Pls. 1-3, 6, 7, 9-11, 15-17; Tolstoy and Kondakov, *Russian Antiquities*, v (1897), pp. 100-35.

[63] M. and V. Uspenski, *Notes (zamêtki) on Ancient Russian Icon-painting* : i. S. Alypius ; ii. Andreï Rublëv, Petersburg, 1901.

[64] All this region was in race and religion one with the rest of Russia, its language was no doubt Ukrainian, but this had not diverged very far from the

main stock : by coming under Lithuanian and Polish rule it has developed a separatism of language and religion (Uniate).

[65] Tolstoy and Kondakov, v, p. 47, f. 27.

[66] Letter of G. O. Chirikov the icon-painter, d. 9 Oct. 1918. For the type see *Iconography of the B.V.M.*, ii (1915), pp. 298-301, ff. 166, 167. A copy is reproduced in Likhachëv's *Materials*, xcv, No. 167; a recent one is in the possession of A. H. Christie, Esq., E. Runton, Norfolk. The attitude is like the Virgin as George of Antioch prays to her at the Martorana, Palermo.

[67] For Russian icons of the eleventh to twelfth centuries see Wulff-Alpatoff, pp. 71-85, esp. ff. 27-8, *Transfiguration and Resurrection* (R. M.), and *S. Michael* at Moscow, Martin Conway, *Art Treasures*, p. 44

[68] Boris and Gleb, sons of Vladimir the Great, to whom he left the principalities of Rostóv and Múrom in the north-east, were murdered in 1015 by their cousin Svyatopólk (the Accursed), who was in turn conquered by Yarosláv. They were no more martyrs than our Edward, King and Martyr, but became popular and inseparable saints. The inscriptions are 'Boris [Ha]lg[i]os, Gleb [Hagios]'.

[69] See the editions of this journey by P. I. Savvaitov, and more recently by Ch. M. Loparëv, published by the Orthodox Palestinian Society.

[70] Published by I. Sreznevski, P. 1860. A fifteenth-century manuscript with pictures is published by N. P. Likhachëv, P. 1907 ; he adds plates of several icons.

[71] Tolstoy and Kondakov, iv, p. 165, f. 150.

[72] *Ib.*, vi, p. 145, f. 185.

[73] Kelermes, sixth century b.c. Rostov-tsev, *Iranians and Greeks*, p. 54, Pl. ix.

[74] For all this see our author's posthumous article, 'Les Costumes Orientaux à la Cour Byzantine', *Byzantion*, i (1924), pp. 7-49.

[75] Wulff-Alpatoff, p. 92, f. 33 : see for the type of Chrysostom, Kondakov, *Athos*, pp. 68-9, PL xvi.

[76] For an icon showing the whole story see Halle, *Altrussische Kunst*, Pls. 19, 21, after Anisimov in *Sofia*, 5, pp. 1-21 ; another picture of it, Buslaev, ii, p. 388. 5.

[77] Grabar'-Muratov, p. 191 ; Wulff-Alpa-toff, p. 71, f. 25.

[78] Russian Museum, No. 108, from the Pogódin Collection. Inscriptions in the Nóvgorod dialect : centre, *S. George, Serpent, Yelisava* : scenes (to be taken, first along the top, then each side alternately, last along the bottom, cf. Pls. LVII and LIX where the order is quite definite) : *S. George distributes his goods to the poor ; soldiers bind and lead him ; they set him before the Emperor ; they put him in prison ; they turn him on a wheel ; he casts own*

idols ; they tear him with hooks ; beat him with oaken staves ; rub him with stones ; burn him with torches ; boil him in a cauldron ; rasp him with a saw ; heap stones round him and. pour water out of pots; they hew him in pieces with the sword. There is something wrong about the last scene but one; the Slavonic legends use the word ‘pot’, *konob*, of the ‘cauldron’ in the one before, and in this case we have ‘pouring lye and tar and stinking stone’, A. N. Veselovski, *Misc. of the Acad, of Sc*, P. xx, p. 168 ; and the Greek *Painters’ Guide*, p. 184, plunges him in quicklime. For the legend see H. Delehaye, *Les Légendes grecques des Saints militaires*, Paris, 1909.

[79] Nóvgorod was divided by the river Vólkhov into two ‘sides’, Sophia Side to the west with the great cathedral and ancient citadel, and Trade Side (*Torgóvaya*) to the east : see plans in Tolstoy and Kondakov, *R. Antiquities*, vi, pp. 96, 97, ff. 117, 118.

[80] Kondakov, *Iconogr. B.V.M.*, ii (1915), p. 224, f. 109 ; Grabar’-Muratov, p. 147, makes it earlier.

[81] A. A. Dmitriévski, *Puteshéstvie po Vostóku* (Travels in the East), 1890 ; Kondakov, *Iconography of B.V.M. : Connexions*, P. 1910 ; N. P. Likhachëv, *The Historical Significance of Italo-Greek Icon-painting*, P. 1911, representations of B.V.M., 1-32. [But see my preface and the note on p. 82. E. H. M.]

[82] This makes the term Italo-Cretan unfortunate.

[83] Laudedeo, *Storia della Pittura Veneziana*, i (1909), pp. 185-208.

[84] Diehl, *Manuel*, p. 701; Dalton, *Byz. Art*, p. 512, and literature there quoted.

[85] *Umilénie* is the name given to the most popular type among icons of the Virgin : the force of the word is difficult to render, it may be active, corresponding to the Greek epithet, expressing the pity of the Virgin for the Son when she thinks of His coming passion ; this derives from *Our Lady of the Passion* (*Strastnáya*), above whom appear angels with the instruments : but more often *umilénie* seems to be a sad tenderness, between love and pity: the verb *umilydt’sya* is ‘ middle’ in sense, ‘to be touched, to feel emotion’, perhaps ‘yearning’ gives it fairly well. For many examples see Kondakov, *Iconography of B.V.M.* (1910) *Connexions*, pp. 150-84, ff. 96-131. Réau, *Art Russe*, i, pp. 152-6, gives a useful summary of the various Virgins.

[86] Testi, *op. cit.*, gives several coloured reproductions of Venetian pictures of the fourteenth century, showing this very clearly.

[87] See Prince E. I. Trubetskóy, *Theory in Colours* (*Umozrênie*, lit. ‘mind seeing’, *v krdsakakh*) and *Two Worlds in Russian Icon-painting*, Moscow, 1916, in which the colouring of the early art is interpreted as a symbolic expression in devotional icons of the way in which old Russia looked upon life and felt

religion. This decipherment of the hidden language of icons discovers in this 'mysterious art' a spiritual significance, an idea of two contending worlds in our life on earth, and a 'sunny mysticism' of colour. This and similar far-fetched non-sense has been read into icons since they have in recent times attracted the attention of the general public.

[88] No. 399 : the photographs accessible are too dark for reproduction.

[89] The painters of icons after the old style who have a rule of thumb knowledge of the different schools.

[90] On the real importance of the Christian objects from Chersonese as models for Kiev, see Kondakov, *Russian Hoards*, i, Introduction, pp. 42 sqq. ; Tolstoy and Kondakov, *Russian Antiquities*, v, p. 27.

[91] The Russians took over the square church with one or five domes upon drums pierced by windows. When imitated in wood the domes and drums lost all opening to the inside and becoming mere adornments of the external silhouette were multiplied beyond measure : side by side with them over bell towers or porches grew up stumpy spires and *bóchki*, saddlebacked roofs with a section like a pointed horseshoe. These wooden forms retranslated into masonry gave rise to the wonderful architecture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

[92] As *Hodegetria* Our Lady holds the Child on her left arm, her right hand is raised and she looks at the spectator ; the Child is very unchildlike ; He does not look at His Mother but straight out of the picture and holds up His right hand to bless the spectator. In the type of *Our Lady of Tikhvin*, the Child looks more to His right : as it dates from 1383 it shows an immense advance in style, and is typically Italo-Cretan.

[93] Kondakov, *Connexions*, pp. 27-32, ff. 14-18.

[94] Honorius of Autun (1090-1120); Migne, *P. L.*, clxxii, col. 958. He goes on to give a legend of the 'white goldfinch'.

[95] This view of the extreme importance of Italian influence upon the art of the eastern Church, exercised first upon the Greek population of Italy, and then through the Italo-Cretan school upon that of the Balkans, Greece proper, and ultimately Russia, is originally due to our author : his great ally is N. P. Likhachëv. It is, however, necessary to mention that another school led by Muratov (in his section of Grabar's *History of Russian Art*) reminds us that independently of Italian influence there had been a renaissance of Byzantine art in the fourteenth century (Millet, *Recherches*, pp. 624 sqq. ; Diehl, *Manuel*, pp. 735 sqq.; Dalton, *Byz. Art*, pp. 19 sqq.; *E. Christian Art*, pp. 236-42) ; D. V. Ayná-lov, *Trans. R. Arch. Soc*, Class. Sect. (1917), pp. 62-230, 'Byz. Painting in the Fourteenth Century', upholds Western influence. This renaissance issued

from the popular and monastic rather than the official world and had a tendency towards the human, the pathetic and the picturesque. We find its chief productions in the later mosaics of Kahrie Djámi (Chora) at Constantinople and in the frescoes of Mistra. It would therefore be unnecessary to go all the way to Italy to find the source of the new themes and the new manner that reached Nóvgorod and Moscow in the fourteenth century (see summary in Réau, *Art Russe*, i, pp. 188-195). The fact that all these arts started from a common basis makes it very hard to distinguish the various currents. Millet (1. c.) shows how extremely complex was the interaction of Italy, the Balkans, Greece, and Palestine with Syria and Egypt. The resultant reached Russia about a century behind and this gave time for influences to come to it by devious ways. Some subjects such as the *Madonna alla Latte*, which had been ascribed to Italy, undoubtedly existed farther East, and Italy may or may not have been the source of the Russian renderings. Others, such as the bird *motif*, are as certainly Western. We must await more study of the monuments of south-east Europe before the question can be cleared up. E. H. M.

[96] It must be noted that the icon now so called is by its type and technique certainly no work of the fourteenth century, but is probably a mere reminiscence of an original which has disappeared.

[97] Alexis, b. 1292, made Metropolitan 1354, d. 1378, was the main adviser of the Princes of Moscow who had just established their position as the chief Russian princes, and were rebuilding the city and its churches in masonry ; Alexis greatly helped the recovery of Moscow after the Black Death. Sergius of Rádonezh, d. 1393, founded in 1337 the Trinity (Tróitskaya Sérgieva) Lavra forty miles north-east of Moscow, the chief monastery in Great Russia: he worked with Alexis in guiding the Princes of Moscow and was the soul of the league which won Kúlikovo Pole against the Tartars. Stephen of Perm, d. 1396, converted the heathen in the far north-east of Russia.

[98] M. and V. Uspénski, Notes upon Russian Icon-painting, A. Rublëv, 1902 ; N. P. Likhachëv, The Styles (Pis'ma) of A. Rublëv, 1907.

[99] *Chin* from Zvenigorod, Muratov, *Peinture*, p. 116, ff. 34-6 : real resemblance to the *Trinity*.

[100] The icon was behind the altar in the cathedral of the Annunciation (*Blagovêshchenie*) at Moscow : tradition says that it was given to the Grand Prince Dmitri, called Donskóy, by the army victorious in 1380 at Kúlikovo on the Don. It has been suggested that on account of its Greek colouring it is the work of Theophanes. The *Dormition of Our Lady* is on the back see Wulff-Alpatoff, p. 153, f. 61.

[101] W. Grüneisen, 'The Illusionist Portrait', *Sofia* (a Russian Art magazine),

No. 4, 1914; Graul, *Die antike Porträt-gemälde aus den Grabstätten des Fajum*, Leipzig, 1888; G. Ebers, *Eine Gallerie antiker Porträts*, Berlin, 1889; U. Wilcken, 'Die Hellenistische Porträts aus El Fajum', *Arch. Anzeiger.*, iv, 1889; Girard, *Peinture Antique*, Paris, 1892, pp. 249 sqq.; Th. Graf, *Collection de Portraits Antiques de l'Époque Grecque en Égypte*, Vienna, n. d.; P. Buberl, Gr.-Äg. *Mumienbildnisse*, ib. 1922.

[102] *Krásny úgol*, the fair or red corner, the place of honour in the peasant's *izbá*.

[103] Such are collected in Kondakov, *Illustrated Painters' Guide (Pódlinnik)*, vol. i, 'Iconography of the Saviour', Petrograd, 1905, which gives this in colours.

[104] Grabar'-Muratov, p. 34.

[105] Kondakov, 'Les Sculptures de la porte de S. Sabine', *Revue Archéologique*, 1877, pp. 361-72 ; Wiegand, *Altchristliche Hauptportal und Reliefs der S. Sabina*, 1900, Taf. 20 ; Diehl, *Manuel*, p. 283, f. 139.

[106] Praskóvia, translated as Pyátnitsa, Friday, the fifth week-day, from *pyaf*, five: see A. N. Veselóvski, *Paraskeva-Pyatnitsa*. The life of S. Parasceve was written by Euthymius, Patriarch of Trnovo, 1375-93.

[107] Slavs begin counting with Monday, so the words for Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday derive from 'second', 'fourth', and 'fifth': Greeks and Latins begin with Sunday.

[108] G. Millet, *Recherches sur l'Iconographie*, pp. 656-60. He is, of course, not to be confused with the Theophanes who worked in Russia, 1400.

[109] *Sobór*, see note n. 4.

[110] Christ celebrating in his own person, served by angels.

[111] Dr. Millet's work above quoted, the result of many years of study, gives an immense store of material, no less than 670 trustworthy pictures, and puts the whole complicated question of the style and content of medieval Christian iconography upon a scientific basis. N. P. K.

[112] The low level of instruction attainable in ancient Russia made the *nachëtchik*, the man who was full of reading without much understanding, so common as to require a special word to denote him.

[113] Several patterns of this subject are reproduced by Kondakov, *Iconogr. of Our Saviour*, 16, 18, 19 : Likhachëv, *Materials*, 210.

[114] Ps. cxlviii. 2, 'Praise him, all his hosts,' Heb. Sabaoth, Gr. Siwá/xeis.

[115] Emmanuel is Christ as a very young man, almost a boy.

[116] Half-way between Easter and Pentecost is read John vii. 14, 'Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught': the scene is much like *Christ among the Doctors*.

- [117] The Indiction is a period of fifteen years generally reckoned to start at A. D. 312, going back to an ancient revaluation of taxable property.
- [118] Kondakov, *Iconogr. of Our Lord*, p. 69, f. III: a simpler form, Buslaev.op.cit. ii, p.291.
- [119] Millet, p. 166, f. 121, frescoes at Ravanica, xiv; Buslaev, *Old-Russian Popular Lit. and Art*, ii, p. 86; Zolotóe Runó (*Toison d'Or*), Sept. 1906, p. 13; Grabar'-Muratov, p. 101 : it is suggested by the word of the Christmas *kontakion*.
- [120] See the Greek *Painters' Guide*, pp. 146, 147.
- [121] It is meet indeed to glorify thee, the Theotokos, ever blessed and sinless and the Mother of Our God. As more honourable than the Cherubim, beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim, as having immaculately borne God the Word, as being the Theotokos we magnify thee': in the ordinary liturgy of S. John Chrysostom it takes the place of 'In thee rejoiceth'. For the icon cf. Grabar'-Muratov, p. 349.
- [122] Kondakov, *Connexions*, p. 141, f. 94.
- [123] So I translate *mélochny*; the word means 'shallow, petty, niggling'.
- [124] Grabar'-Muratov, pp. 27, 293, 292; Halle, Nos. 34, 39, 42; Likhachëv, *Mat. cxLVIII-CL. 260-2*.
- [125] See Golubinski, *Hist. R. Ch.1 I. ii*, p. 400; Abp. Sergius, *On the Pokrov Festival*, assigned it to the church of Súzdal'; Kondakov, reviewing Likhachëv's *Materials*, in *Journ. Min. Publ. Instr.*, 1907; *Iconogr. B. V. M.* ii (1915), pp. 55 sqq.
- [126] Macarius of Antioch was interested in it and the icon is described fully, much to the discomfiture of the translator : i, p. 315.
- [127] Tolstoy and Kondakov, *R. Ant.* vi, pp. 65-72,f.103.
- [128] Réau, Pl. 22, puts it down as fourteenth century, perhaps on account of the lettering. S. Romanus does not yet appear. Others in Likhachëv, *Materials*, cxxxiii-cxxxv. 235-7. 240.
- [129] Another Halle, 32 = Likhachëv, cxxxvi. 241, put down as c. 1500 but probably later.
- [130] Dalton, *Byz. Art*, p. 124.
- [131] Tolstoy and Kondakov, *R. Ant.* vi, p.157. f. 197.
- [132] Testi, *Storia della Pittura Veneziana*, i, ff. on pp. 401, 405, 407, 409, 411, 423.
- [133] Ed. Papadopoulo-Kerameus, p. 21. The word seems to me rather to 2563 R describe a particular blend of pigments than a manner of laying them on. E. H. M.
- [134] E. Müntz, 'La Propagande de la Arts, 3e sér., viii. 274; ix. 19. Renaissance

en Orient', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*

[135] In the church of the Purification (*Srêtenie*) at Moscow are paintings signed by a Dalmatian icon-painter in 1488.

[136] *Stárets*, originally an old man and secondarily a monk, hermit, or holy wan-derer.

[137] Emlie Mâle, *L'Art religieux à la fin du Moyen Age en France*, 1908.

[138] S. G. Vilinski, *The Life of S. Basil the New in Russian Literature*, 1911.

[139] Grabar'-Muratov, pp. 254, 256.

[140] *Ib.*, p. 336, coloured Plate.

[141] A good description of this church and its icons by P. Gúsev in *Trans, of the 15th* (Nóvgorod, 1911) *Archaeological Congress*, ii (Moscow, 1916), pp. 138-50, Pls. I-vI.

[142] Nóvgorod had been taken by Ivan III in 1478; in 1547, Macarius, formerly Archbishop of Nóvgorod, now Metropolitan of Moscow, brought icon-painters from Nóvgorod to Moscow, primarily to decorate the cathedral of the Annunciation : in 1570 Nóvgorod was sacked by Ivan the Terrible.

[143] P. P. Murátov wrote a special illustrated study of this collection under the title *Ancient Russian Icon-painting*, M. 1911.

[144] Icons published as from Pskov : *Ro-gozhski Album; Atlas of the Icon Exhibition* (1913), Nos. 63, 66, 72.

[145] In the middle of the fifteenth century we find a Stróganov claiming lands possessed by the men of Nóvgorod in north Russia : a century later the family had immensely increased in wealth, and systematically undertook to exploit the country of the Kama and the northern Urals, with its riches of fish, salt, and minerals, and finally they were responsible for the conquest of Siberia. They were no doubt the richest Russian subjects, and being good church-men took pleasure in icons. We have tales of their having supported their own icon-painters, and a few icons bearing the names of the family have survived, mostly in a very detailed elaborate style. Hence, early investigators have sought to form a whole class of Stróganov icons divided into different styles. Our author is sceptical at any rate about the earlier styles. The great Stróganov collection of works of art is safe in the State Hermitage Museum.

[146] A short narrative of the facts touching icon-painting in Moscow, drawn from the Chronicles, is given by V. Shchépkin in his article on Moscow icon-painting in the composite publication *Moscow*.

[147] Founded by S. Alexis in 1365 in honour of the miracle (*cltúdo*) of S. Michael at Chonae (Colossae), in striking the earth with his spear and making a spring flow.

[148] A. M. Uspénski, *Dictionary of the Tsars' Painters of Icons and of Pictures*

during the XVIIth Century, 2 vols., M. 1910-13.

[149] Many works of these men are coming to light with recent cleaning, *vide Slav. Review*, 1. c, p. 355.

[150] A westerner is tempted to wonder whether in this later period there were not an Oriental as well as a European influence: the perfection of decorative detail certainly recalls Eastern work, and so does something in the colouring and surface. This is not to fall into the heresy of Viollet-le-Duc whose *Art Russe*, Paris, 1877, put everything down to the East. E. H. M.

[151] A late Greek prayer to be said by a bishop over a newly painted icon in Goar, *Euchologion*, 1730, p. 672.

[152] See I.E. Zabêlin's books quoted on p. 4, n. 3. The street names in Moscow largely preserve the memory of the sites of these royal workshops.

[153] 1598-1605. Not descended from Rurik, and accused of having murdered Dmitri, Ivan's younger son, at Uglich, Boris never established his power and his death was followed by the Troublous Times, pre-tenders, Polish invasions, and civil strife ended by the establishment of the Romanovs in 1613.

[154] This is said now to have been done.

[155] Cf. A. I. Uspenski, 'Ancient Russian Painting (*Zhivopis*)', *Zolotóe Runó*, 7-9, 1906, pp. 39-45; *Drevnosti*, Preservation Committee, III, 1909, pp. 146-77, Pl. xv-xxi; Grabar'-Muratov, pp. 288-96.

[156] Discussion and illustration of nearly all the types now to be enumerated and of many more will be found in our author's works *The Iconography of Our Lady*, esp. vol. ii (1915), and *Connexions* (1910). The best of the icons he proceeds to mention have now been gathered into the Historical Museum at Moscow.

[157] See Halle, Pls. 26, 43-5, after Murátov.

[158] Halle 45 = Réau 38, no wings.

[159] e.g. Réau, ii, pp. 141-54, Pl. 43.

[160] The best account of the matter is in Busláev, *Historical Sketches*, ii, pp. 281-329; see also Solov'ëv, *Hist. of Russia*, ii, p. 440, and Golubinski, *Hist. R. Ch.*, II. i, p. 841.

[161] Both throne and altar in the Christian sense.

[162] Most of the complicated icons spoken of in the following pages may be found in Likhachëv's *Materials*.

[163] Halle, Pl. 42, see p. 114, n. 1.

[164] D. A. Rovinski, *Russian Popular Pictures*, v. 183-7. Kiev was now under more direct western influence than Muscovy, and its great archbishop, Peter Mohila, was a Moldavian.

[165] Buslaev, *op. cit.* ii, pp. 291 sqq.

- [166] Gospels of Rabula, A. d. 586, Laur. Syr. Cod. 56: it contains two versions of the scene, one with the Virgin, and one with the crowd.
- [167] The Greek origin of this interpretation is shown by a seventeenth-century icon at S. Giorgio dei Greci: in the cave under the arch sits the king and holds up in a cloth silver vessels, pearls.
- [168] *Svêtilnik*, 1914, No. 4, pp. 23-32, Plates.
- [169] *Klobúk*: strictly the cloth covering the square-topped high head-dress, or *kamildvka*, and falling from it behind. A white *klobuk* was the special mark of the Metropolitan of Moscow.
- [170] Called variously *tyabló*, a board, *kleytnó*, a seal, or *zhit'ya*, lives.
- [171] Grabar'-Muratov gives fourteen illustrations of icons from these chapels including most of those above mentioned: see also *Monuments of Russian Art*, Pt. Ill, published by the Imperial Academy of Arts, and *Zolotoe Runo* (*supra*, p. no, n. 1). I well remember the impression produced upon me by the beauty of these chapels which I visited at our author's recommendation. E. H. M.
- [172] Kondakov, *Athos*, pp. 246-8, Pl. xl. Russian broideries, Shchekótov, *Sofia*, i.
- [173] *Chin*, an 'order' such as the seven Orders of Angels: another word of much the same meaning is *lik*, lit. and often = 'face' but sometimes 'order or company' : *Lik Svyatíteley*, 'the Order of Sainted Bishops'. *Lik Múchenikov*, 'the Company of Martyrs'.
- [174] Now added to the Russian Museum.
- [175] Grand Duke Nicholas Mikhailovich Románov, *Le Comte Paul Stroganov*:, 1905, xvii-xix.
- [176] Grabar'-Muratov, p. 371.
- [177] This seems to be Grabar'-Muratov, pp. 373-6, or something very like it.
- [178] *Ib.*, p. 372.
- [179] A Goth martyred by Athanaric.
- [180] Grabar'-Muratov, p. 405.
- [181] This is an extreme case of the incor-porating of subsidiary scenes into a main picture.
- [182] Wife of Diocletian.
- [183] Venturi, vii, ff. 254, 255, 305, 307, 311.
- [184] *Stárye Gódy* (Old Times), 1913, July-Sept. P. Muratov, *Icon-painting under the first Tsar of the House of Romanov*.
- [185] A. I. Uspenski gives many of his very Polish icons in *Zolotoe Runo*, 7-9, 1906, pp. 65-85.
- [186] Grabar'-Muratov, pp. 392-400.
- [187] Grabar'-Muratov, p. 404.

- [188] G. D. Filimonov, *Simon Ushakov and the Russian Icon-painting of his Time*, Moscow, 1873.
- [189] D. K. Trenev, *Pámyatniki drevne-rússkago Iskússtva Tsérkvi Gruzínskoy Bogomáteri v Moskvê* (Monuments of Ancient Russian Art in the Church of Our Lady of Georgia, Moscow), 1908 ; cf. Novitski, *Hist. R. Art*, i, p. 235, f. 154 ; Grabar, ii, p. 125.
- [190] This part is shown in Grabar'-Murztov, P. 439.
- [191] *Blazhénný*, lit. blessed, is an euphemism for *Yuródivý* (cf. p. 115), the half-witted fakir-like saint common in the Eastern Church.
- [192] Grabar'-Muratov, p. 427.
- [193] Something simiar in *The Church Militant*, 1540, Muratov. *Sofia, Peinture*, p. 163, f. 52.
- [194] Built by Italian architects between 1485 and 1508, Réau, p. 244 ; the best completed by Christopher Galloway in 1625.
- [195] Kondakov, *Iconography of Our Saviour*.
- [196] S. Vakhramêev, *The Church of Elias the Prophet at Yaroslavl'*, 1918; Nekrásov, *The Church of S. John the Baptist at Yaroslavl'*, 1915; Pokrovski, *Wall-paintings in the Ancient Churches of Greece and Russia*, 1890, pp. 252-97. See also Halle, Pls. 47, 48; Réau, Pls. 76, 79, 81, 92-6; Grabar', vi, pp. 481-534.
- [197] The great leader of the Old Believers; his name is the Greek form of Habakkuk. The translation of his *Life* by Jane Harrison and Hope Mirrlees, London, 1924.
- [198] Likhachëv, *Materials*, Pl. cccxxiv, No. 622.
- [199] *Ancient Icons in the Póstnikov Collection*, Pl. 97.
- [200] F. I. Buslaev, *The Russian Illustrated Apocalypse*, M. 1884.
- [201] Manuscripts are known from A.D. 1219 downto the eighteenth century. A very full example from Nóvgorod of the sixteenth century with many illustrations was published by V. N. Shchepkin for the Historical Museum at Moscow.
- [202] S. G. Vilinski edited the text with full commentary in 1911.
- [203] Published by N. Bokadorov in the *Kiev Miscellany (Sbornik)* 1904.
- [204] Buslaev, *Hist. Sketches*, i, pp. 622-9; Golyshev, *Album of Russian Synodica*, 1896; E. Pêtukhóv, *Sketches from the Literary History of the Synodicon*, 1895.
- [205] S. Basil died in 944: his life was written by his pupil Gregory the Monk.
- [206] *Bulgarian Illustrated Synodicon*, Public Library, Sofia, No. 998, eighteenth century. The *Synodicon* of Tatiana, daughter of Michael Feodorovich, d. 1706, partly her own writing. Amphilochius, *Description of the*

Library at New Jerusalem (a cell to Sergievo), pp. 116-24, Moscow, 1875.

[207] D. A. Rovinski, *Russian Popular Pictures*. 5 volumes, fo.; N. Bogátenko, *Traces of Moral Symbolism in Russian Iconography* 1913.

[208] *Cat. of Ct. Uvarov's Collection*, 1907, No. 31, f. 10.

[209] A Russian keeps the day of his Patron Saint rather than his birthday and this is called 'the day of his Angel'.

[210] Dalton, *Byz. Art*, pp. 666, 668, n. 2.